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CHATEAUBRIAND IN EXILE.

AU PAYS D'ÉXIL DE CHATEAUBRIAND. Par ANATOLE LE BRAZ. (Paris. Champion, 3f. 50c.)

There has lately been a great revival of interest in France, and even in some degree in England, in the remarkable personality of Chateaubriand. His life, however, as M. Le Braz justly says, "remains to be written"; for the existing biographies are mainly based on the "Mémoires d'Outre-tombe," a [illegible] portion of *Wahrheit* to *Dichtung* in that [illegible] to sack at Falstaff's

of Embassy in London, supports it; and it receives further confirmation from some letters recently disinterred and printed in "Les Annales Romantiques." So M. Le Braz, after shaking his head over it, and pointing out one or two minor inaccuracies, decides to let it stand. It is not true, for instance, that Miss Ives, on her marriage, became Lady Sutton—she only became Mrs. Sutton. But it is true that she was in love with her French master; true that her parents invited the French master to propose to her; true that the hint elicited the confession that he was a married man; true that he fled from Bussay in con-

July 1. 1909. THE TIMES LI

sequence of the *contretemps*; true even that his agony of mind was one of the inspiring sources of the pessimism of "René."

The book in which M. Le Braz sets forth his discoveries is the result of a personal pilgrimage and a careful inquiry conducted on the spot. It needs to be supplemented by a study of the article on the same subject lately published by M. Dick in the *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*; but it is bright, readable, and sympathetic, and packed with new information, much of it taken from unpublished documents.

meadow, author of "Susan," is now ready. The first review (*The Globe*) says:—"Mr. Oldmeadow has undoubtedly written an impressive novel, one which is certain to advance his literary career, for it is his highest achievement . . . The heroine is a charming creature, and her independence and frankness only add to her fascination. Mr. Oldmeadow also writes of the period picturesquely and gives pictures of Portugal and the Benedictine Priory which are full of life and colour"; and the second (*The Daily Chronicle*):—"The story is of a very high order indeed, and will please, not only those who enjoy a good tale filled with action and touched with love [illegible]

By the Author of 'SUSAN.' 6s.

ANTONIO

By Ernest Oldmeadow

6s.

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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

ITALY,

ENGLAND AND AMERICA,

WITH

Essays on Various Subjects,

IN

MORALS AND LITERATURE,

BY

F. A. DE CHATEAUBRIAND.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN,
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1815.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

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Recollections of England.

Recollections of America.

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ERRATA.

Page 34, lines 8 and 9, for *he* and *his* read *she* and *her*.
156, —— 11, for *entiment* read *sentiment*.
175, —— 8, the word *that* should be the first in this line, and erased from the next.
213, —— 3, for *is* read *was*.
214, —— 11, for *as* read *like*.
226, —— 19, for *plains* read *planes*.
229, —— 14, after the word *body*, insert *is*.
256, —— 19, for 5°. read 135°.

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THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

If the reputation of M. de Chateaubriand, already established by works of the greatest merit, has received a considerable addition from the *Essay on Ancient and Modern Revolutions*, which we have just published, his *Recollections of Italy, England and America*, with the excellent *Essays on Literature and Morals* that accompany them, will certainly add to it.

Throughout this collection will be found those energetic ideas, that fine imagination, that picturesque colouring, those ingenious comparisons and original turns of expression which impart a peculiar charm to M. de Chateaubriand's writings. No Author of

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the present day has, like him, attained the art of connecting literature with morals, by a style abounding in imagery and rich in sentiments. This happy talent is displayed in every page, and there are even passages, in which it is still more manifest than in his greater works.

Several of the detached Essays appeared in the *Mercure de France*, between the years 1800 and 1807. The Author at this time finished his *Beauties of Christianity*, and trusted that he had thereby erected a monument to the religion of his forefathers. It must be acknowledged that, in several parts of this work, he displays a soul fully impressed with the perfections of Christianity. His travels to Palestine, procured us the poem of *The Martyrs*, and the *Itinerary* of that country. After his return, M. de Chateaubriand would perhaps have determined to resume his labours in the *Mercure*, had he not found the spirit of that journal

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entirely altered, and had he not been disgusted by the despotism of the French ruler, who wished not only to command the writings, but even the conversation and very thoughts of his subjects; particularly of those who were distinguished authors. It is true that M. de Chateaubriand had himself praised the despot; but this was at a period when it was still excusable to be mistaken as to the real character of Buonaparte. None of the enlightened men had penetration enough to prophecy that the general of the expedition to Egypt would be the future opponent to the rights of humanity, and M. de Chateaubriand has the further excuse, that when the Statesmen and Writers of France began to rival each other in meanness, and prostrate themselves at the foot of the throne, the Author of the *Beauties of Christianity* ceased to worship the unworthy idol of transient glory, recovered by degrees, and silently resumed

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the noble attitude which belonged to him. It was now the despot's turn to humble himself before the greatest writer of his Empire, and he adopted measures to draw M. de Chateaubriand into the circle of his slaves, but in vain. All his power was ineffectual, when exerted to shake the firm and noble soul of a simple individual, who was no longer to be imposed upon by fictitious grandeur. He was induced, however, by dint of persuasion, to become a member of the first literary body in France. It was necessary that he should make a public oration upon this occasion, and it was then that he prepared the eulogium on liberty, which will be found in the present publication. His intrepidity astonished the Institute and Government. He was forbidden to deliver his oration, but he was no longer importuned for his support, which could palpably never be obtained afterwards. From this period his heart, afflicted by the misfortunes

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of France, and the degradation which literature and the arts had experienced, was doomed to sigh in secret; but it experienced consolation when the tyrant began to lose the power of oppressing and ruining the nation. Those, who never could have displayed the courage of M. de Chateaubriand, thought proper to criticize his admirable publication in favour of the Bourbons,* as being a work too strongly betraying the passions of the writer. They would perhaps have written in colder blood, because their eyes were then familiarized with the horrors which they saw incessantly renewed. But can the soul of a great writer remain torpid when liberty dawns upon his unfortunate country? Would Cicero and Demosthenes have remained torpid if they had been called upon to expose, the one an incendiary's crimes, and the other a conquering mo-

* Of Buonaparte and the Bourbons, 8vo. 1814.

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narch's artifices and ambition? And what were these subjects in comparison with the great interests of the world, which were discussed during April 1814, in the capital of France? Cold blooded people are often useful; but still a single energetic man, when fired with honest indignation, can effect more than thousands of frigid disposition. When the revolution, so ardently desired by all those who possessed hearts not debased by slavery, was effected, the *Political Reflections* of M. de Chateaubriand were of a calmer nature, and bore reference only to the happiness which France was about to enjoy under the sway of the Bourbons.

That happiness has been, alas, of short duration. The revolutionary system is re-established in France, and M. de Chateaubriand has again quitted his country for the purpose of following his King, and devoting his pen to the instruction of his unfortunate

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countrymen, by writings similar to those of which all Europe acknowledges the energetic influence.

Though M. de Chateaubriand has gained the applause of all civilized nations, and though his works have been several times printed in his native language, as well as translated into almost all the languages of Europe, it is nevertheless a fact that in his own country a numerous party of calumniators have tried to overwhelm him with criticisms, parodies, satires and injuries. It is true that they have not been able to diminish his reputation as an Author, but they have succeeded so far as to create in the public mind an uncertainty as to the rank which he ought to hold in literature. His imagination is too vivid, and sometimes carries away his reason, so that he falls occasionally into extravagant expressions, and arguments which are more specious than solid. His detractors dwell on his slight im-

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perfections, and represents them as constituting the foundation of his writings. They do not chuse to see that a fine imagination is, in spite of some aberrations, infinitely superior to all those ordinary minds, the productions of which appear wise, because the rules of grammar are observed in them, and the ideas of the day exactly met. Those authors may please, but their reputation will not extend beyond the limits of their country and age. It is only by taking for their models the superior beauties of M. de Chateaubriand's style, and avoiding his defects, that they can hope to equal his reputation, and to excite, like him, the enthusiasm of all who possess cultivated minds.

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RECOLLECTIONS

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RECOLLECTIONS

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ROME AND ITS ENVIRONS.

TO MONSIEUR DE FONTANES.

My dear friend,

I am just arrived at Rome from Naples, and send you all my journey has produced, for you have a right to this all—a few laurel leaves snatched from the tomb of Virgil, whom "*tenet nunc Parthenope.*" I should long since have given you a description of this classic region, but various circumstances have hindered me. I will not leave Rome, however, without saying a few words about so celebrated a city. We agreed that I was to address you

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without ceremony; and to tell you at a venture whatever impressions were made upon me in Italy, as I formerly related to you what ideas I had formed, while wandering through the solitudes of the New World. Without further preamble, then, I will attempt to give you an account of the environs of Rome, that is to say, the adjacent country and the ruins.

You have read all that has been written on this subject, but I do not know whether travellers have given you a very just idea of the picture, which the Roman territory presents. Figure to yourself something of the desolation at Tyre and Babylon, as described in scripture —silence and solitude as vast as the noise and tumult of men, who formerly crowded together on this spot. One may almost fancy that the prophet's curse is still heard, when he announced that two things should happen on a single day, sterility and widowhood.* You see here and there some remains of Roman roads, in places where nobody ever passes, and some dried-up

* Isaiah.

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tracks of winter torrents, which at a distance have themselves the appearance of large frequented roads, but which are in reality the beds of waters, formerly rushing onwards with impetuosity, though they have now passed away like the Roman nation. It is with some difficulty that you discover any trees, but on every side you behold the ruins of aqueducts and tombs, which appear to be the forests and indigenous plants of this land—composed as it is of mortal dust, and the wrecks of empires. I have often thought that I beheld rich crops in a plain, but on approaching them, found that my eye had been deceived by withered grass. Under this barren herbage traces of ancient culture may sometimes be discovered. Here are no birds, no labourers, no lowing of cattle, no villages. A few miserably managed farms appear amidst the general nakedness of the country, but the windows and doors of the habitations are closed. No smoke, no noise, no inhabitant proceeds from them. A sort of savage, in tattered garments, pale and emaciated by fever, guards these melancholy dwellings, like the spectres who

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defend the entrance of abandoned castles in our gothic legends. It may be said, therefore, that no nation has dared to take possession of the country, once inhabited by the masters of the world, and that you see these plains as they were left by the ploughshare of Cincinnatus, or the last Roman team.

It is in the midst of this uncultivated region that the eternal city raises her head. Decayed as to her terrestial power, she appears to have resolved on proudly isolating herself. She has separated herself from the cities of the world, and like a dethroned queen, has nobly concealed her misfortunes in solitude.

I should in vain attempt to describe the sensation experienced, when Rome suddenly appears to your view amidst her *inania regna*, as if raising herself from the sepulchre in which she had been lying. Picture to yourself the distress and astonishment, which the prophets experienced, when God, in a vision, shewed them some city, to which he had attached the destiny of his chosen people.* The multitude

* Ezekiel.

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of recollections and the crowd of sensations oppress you, so that your very soul is disordered at beholding the place—for it is Rome, which has twice inherited the empire of the world, first as the heir to Saturn, and secondly to Jacob.*

You will, perhaps, think, from my description, that nothing can be more frightful than the Roman environs; but in this conjecture you would be egregiously mistaken. They possess an inconceivable grandeur, and in contemplating them, you would be always ready to exclaim with Virgil:

Salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus,
Magna virûm! †

---

* Montaigne thus describes the neighbourhood of Rome about two centuries ago.

"We had at a distance, on our left, the Appennines, and the prospect of a country by no means pleasant, uneven and full of gaps, which would render it difficult to range troops in regular order. The country is without trees, and a considerable part of it sterile, open on every side, and more than ten miles in circumference. Like all other countries too of this description, it is very thinly inhabited."

† Hail, happy land, producing richest fruits,
And heroes of renown!

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If you view them as an economist, they will displease you; but if you survey them as an artist, or a poet, or a philosopher, you will perhaps not wish them to be altered. The sight of a corn-field or a vineyard would not cause such strong emotions in your mind as that of a country, where modern culture has not renovated the soil, and which may be said to have become as purely antique as the ruins which cover it.

Nothing is so beautiful as the lines of the Roman horizon, the gentle inclination of the plains, and the soft flying contour of the terminating mountains. The valleys often assume the form of an arena, a circus, or a riding-house. The hills are cut in terraces, as if the mighty hand of the Romans had moved the whole land at pleasure. A peculiar vapour is spread over distant objects, which takes off their harshness and rounds them. The shadows are never black and heavy; for there are no masses so obscure, even among the rocks and foliage, but that a little light may always insinuate itself. A singular tint and most peculiar harmony unite the earth, the sky, and the waters. All the

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surfaces unite at their extremities by means of an insensible gradation of colours, and without the possibility of ascertaining the point, at which one ends, or another begins. You have doubtless admired this sort of light in Claude Lorrain's landscapes. It appears ideal and still more beautiful than nature; but it is the light of Rome.

I did not omit to see the Villa Borghese, and to admire the sun as he cast his setting beams upon the cypresses of Mount Marius or on the pines of Villa Pamphili. I have also often directed my way up the Tiber to enjoy the grand scene of departing day at Ponte Mole. The summits of the Sabine mountains then appear to consist of lapis lazuli and pale gold, while their base and sides are enveloped in a vapour, which has a violet or purple tint. Sometimes beautiful clouds, like light chariots, borne on the winds with inimitable grace, make you easily comprehend the appearance of the Olympian Deities under this mythologic sky. Sometimes ancient Rome seems to have stretched into the West all the purple of her Consuls and Cæsars,

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and spread them under the last steps of the god of day. This rich decoration does not disappear so soon as in our climate. When you suppose that the tints are vanishing, they suddenly re-appear at some other point of the horizon. Twilight succeeds to twilight, and the charm of closing day is prolonged. It is true that at this hour of rural repose, the air no longer resounds with *bucolic* song; you no longer hear the "*dulcia linquimus arva*," but the victims of sacred immolation are still to be seen. White bulls and troops of half-wild horses daily descend to the banks of the Tiber, and quench their thirst with its waters. You would fancy yourself transported to the times of the ancient Sabines, or to the age of the Arcadian Evander, when the Tiber was called Albula,* and Eneas navigated its unknown stream.

I will acknowledge without hesitation that the vicinity of Naples is more dazzling than that of Rome. When the blazing sun, or the large red moon rises above Vesuvius, like a body of

* Livy.

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fire shot from its volcanic crater, the bay of Naples, and its banks fringed with orange-trees, the mountains of Sorrento, the island of Capri, the coast of Pozzuoli, Baiæ, Misene, Cumes, Averno, the Elysian fields, and all this Virgilian district, present to the view a magic spectacle, but it does not possess the imposing grandeur of the Roman territory. It is at least certain that almost every one is prodigiously attached to this celebrated region. Two thousand years have elapsed since Cicero believed himself an exile for life, and wrote to one of his intimate friends: "*Urbem, mi Rufi, cole, et in istâ luce vive.*"* The attraction of the lovely Ausonia is still the same. Many examples are quoted of travellers, who came to Rome for the purpose of passing a few days, and remained there all their lives. Poussin could not resist the temptation

* "It is at Rome, that you must live my dear Rufus; it is that luminary which you must inhabit." I believe the passage occurs in the first or second book of the familiar Epistles; but as I quote from memory, I hope that any little mistake in this respect will be overlooked.

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of residing, till his death, in a country which afforded such exquisite landscapes; and at the very moment that I pen this letter, I have the pleasure of being acquainted with M. d'Agincourt, who has lived here alone for five-and-twenty years, and who holds forth fair promise that France will also have her Winckelman.

Whoever occupies himself solely in the study of antiquities and the fine arts, or whoever has no other ties in life, should live at Rome. He will there find, for his society, a district which will nurture his reflections and take possession of his heart, with walks, which will always convey to him instruction. The stone, which he treads upon will speak to him, and the dust, which the wind blows around him, will be decomposed particles of some great human being. Should he be unhappy—should he have mingled the ashes of those, whom he loved, with the ashes of the illustrious dead, what placid delight will he experience when he passes from the sepulchre of the Scipios to the tomb of a virtuous friend, from the superb mausoleum of Cecilia Metella to the modest grave of an unfortunate woman!

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He will fancy that their beloved shades find pleasure in wandering round these monuments, with that of a Cicero still lamenting his dear Tullia, or an Agrippina still occupied with the urn of Germanicus. If he be a christian, how will he be able to tear himself away from this land, which is become his own country—this land, which is become the seat of a second empire more sacred, and more powerful than the first—this land, where the friends, whom we have lost, sleep with saints in their catacombs, under the eye of the father of the faithful, appearing as if they would be the first who awoke from their long sleep, and the nearest to Heaven.

Though Rome, when internally examined, resembles at present, in a great degree, the generality of European cities, it still preserves a peculiar character; for no other city affords a similar mixture of architecture and ruins, from the Pantheon of Agrippa to the gothic walls of Belisarius, or the monuments brought from Alexandria to the dome erected by Michael Angelo. The beauty of the women is another distinguishing

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feature. They recal by their gait and carriage the Clelias and Cornelias. You might fancy that you saw the ancient statues of Juno and Pallas, which had descended from their pedestals, and were walking round their temples. Among the Romans too is to be seen that tone of carnation which artists call the historic colour, and which they use in their paintings. It appears natural that men, whose ancestors played so conspicuous a part in the great theatre of the world, should have served as models for Raphael and Dominichino, when they represented historical personages.

Another singularity of the city of Rome is the number of goats, and more particularly, large oxen with enormous horns. The latter are used in teams; and you will find these animals lying at the feet of the Egyptian obelisks, among the ruins of the Forum, and under the arches, through which they formerly passed, conducting the triumphant Roman to that Capitol which Cicero calls *the public council of the universe.*

Romanos ad templa Deûm duxêre triumphos.

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With the usual noise of great cities is here mingled the noise of waters heard on every side, as if you were near the fountains of Blandusia and Egeria. From the summit of the hills, inclosed within the boundaries of Rome, or at the extremity of several streets you have a view of the fields in perspective, which mixture of town and country has a very picturesque effect. In winter the tops of the houses are covered with herbage, not unlike the old thatched cottages of our peasantry. These combined circumstances impart to Rome a sort of rural appearance, and remind you that its first dictators guided the plough, that it owed the empire of the world to its labourers, and that the greatest of its poets did not disdain to instruct the children of Romulus in the art of Hesiod.

Ascræumque cano romana per oppida carmen.

As to the Tiber, which waters, and participates in the glory of this city, its destiny is altogether strange. It passes through a corner of Rome, as if it did not exist. No one deigns to cast his eyes towards it, no one speaks of it,

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no one drinks its waters, and the women do not even use it for washing. It steals away between the paltry houses which conceal it, and hastens to precipitate itself into the sea, ashamed of its modern appellation, *Tevere*.

I must now, my dear friend, say something of the ruins, which you so particularly requested me to mention when I wrote to you. I have minutely examined them all, both at Rome and Naples, except the temples of Paestum, which I have not had time to visit. You are aware that they assume different characters, according to the recollections attached to them.

On a beautiful evening in July last I seated myself at Colisée, on a step of the altar dedicated to the sufferings of the Passion. The sun was setting, and poured floods of gold through all the galleries, which had formerly been thronged with men; while, at the same time, strong shadows were cast by the broken corridors and other ruinous parts, or fell on the ground in large masses from the lofty structure. I perceived among the ruins, on the right of the edifice, the gardens of Cæsar's palace, with

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a palm-tree, which seems to have been placed in the midst of this wreck, expressly for painters and poets. Instead of the shouts of joy, which heretofore proceeded from the ferocious spectators in this amphitheatre, on seeing Christians devoured by lions and panthers, nothing was now heard but the barking of dogs, which belonged to the hermit resident here as a guardian of the ruins. At the moment that the sun descended below the horizon, the clock in the dome of Saint Peter resounded under the porticoes of Collisée. This correspondence, through the medium of religious sounds, between the two grandest monuments of Pagan and Christian Rome, caused a lively emotion in my mind. I reflected that this modern edifice would fall in its turn, like the ancient one, and that the memorials of human industry succeed each other like the men, who erected them. I called to mind that the same Jews, who, during their first captivity, worked at the edifices of Egypt and Babylon, had also, during their last dispersion built this enormous structure; that the vaulted roofs, which now re-echoed this Christian bell

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were the work of a Pagan emperor, who had been pointed out by prophecy as destined to complete the destruction of Jerusalem. Are not these sufficiently exalted subjects of meditation to be inspired by a single ruin, and do you not think that a city, where such effects are produced at every step, is worthy of examination?

I went to Collisée again yesterday, the 9th of January, for the purpose of seeing it at another season, and in another point of view. On my arrival I was surprised at not hearing the dogs, who generally appeared and barked in the superior corridors of the amphitheatre, among the ruins and withered herbage. I knocked at the door of the hermitage, which was formed under one of the arches, but I received no answer—the hermit was dead. The inclemency of the season, the absence of this worthy recluse, combined with several recent and afflicting recollections, increased the sadness arising from this place to such an extent that I almost supposed myself to be looking at the ruins of an edifice, which I had, a few days before, admired in a fresh and perfect state. It is thus that we are constantly

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reminded of our nothingness. Man searches around him for objects to convince his reason. He meditates on the remains of edifices and empires; forgetting that he himself is a ruin still more instable, and that he will perish even before these. What most renders our life "the shadow of a shade"* is that we cannot hope to live long in the recollection of our friends. The heart, in which our image is graven, is like the object, of which it retains the features—perishable clay. I was shewn, at Portici, a piece of cinder taken from Vesuvius, which crumbles into dust when touched, and which preserves the impression, (daily diminishing) of a female's breast and arm, who was buried under the ruins of Pompeia. Though not flattering to our self-love, this is the true emblem of the traces left by our memory in the hearts of men, who are only dust and ashes.†

Before I took my departure for Naples, I passed some days alone at Tivoli. I traversed the ruins in its environs, and particularly those

* Pindar. † Job.

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of Villa Adriana. Being overtaken by a shower of rain in the midst of my excursion, I took refuge in the halls of Thermes near Pécile* under a fig-tree, which had thrown down a wall by its growth. In a small octagonal saloon, which was open before me, a vine had penetrated through fissures in the arched roof, while its smooth and red crooked stem mounted along the wall like a serpent. Round me, across the arcades, the Roman country was seen in different points of view. Large elder trees filled the deserted apartments, where some solitary blackbirds found a retreat. The fragments of masonry were garnished with the leaves of scolopendra, the satin verdure of which appeared like mosaic work upon the white marble. Here and there lofty cypresses replaced the columns, which had fallen into these palaces of death. The wild acanthus crept at their feet on the ruins, as if nature had taken pleasure in re-producing, upon these mutilated *chefs-d'œuvre* of architecture, the ornament of their past beauty. The dif-

* Remains of the Ville.

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ferent apartments and the summits of the ruins were covered with pendant verdure; the wind agitated these humid garlands, and the plants bent under the rain of Heaven.

While I contemplated this picture, a thousand confused ideas passed across my mind. At one moment I admired, at the next detested Roman grandeur. At one moment I thought of the virtues, at another of the vices, which distinguished this lord of the world, who had wished to render his garden a representation of his empire. I called to mind the events, by which his superb villa had been destroyed. I saw it despoiled of its most beautiful ornaments by the successor of Adrian—I saw the barbarians passing like a whirlwind, sometimes cantoning themselves here; and, in order to defend themselves amidst these monuments of art which they had half destroyed, surmounting the Grecian and Tuscan orders with gothic battlements—finally, I saw Christians bringing back civilization to this district, planting the vine, and guiding the plough into the temple of the Stoics, and the saloons of the Academy.* Ere long the

* Remains of the Villa.

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arts revived, and the monarchs employed persons to overturn what still remained of these gorgeous palaces, for the purpose of obtaining some master-pieces of art. While these different thoughts succeeded each other, an inward voice mixed itself with them, and repeated to me what has been a hundred times written on the vanity of human affairs. There is indeed a double vanity in the remains of the Villa Adriana; for it is known that they were only imitations of other remains, scattered through the provinces of the Roman empire. The real temple of Serapis and Alexandria, and the real academy at Athens no longer exist; so that in the copies of Adrian you only see the ruins of ruins.

I should now, my dear friend, describe to you the temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli, and the charming temple of Vesta, suspended over the cascade; but I cannot spare time for the purpose. I regret, too, that I am unable to depict this cascade, on which Horace has conferred celebrity. When there, I was in your domain, for you are the inheritor of the Grecian αφελια, or the "*simplex munditiis*," described by the author of the *Ars Poetica*; but I saw it in very gloomy

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weather, and I myself was not in good spirits. I will further confess that I was in some degree annoyed by this roar of waters, though I have been so often charmed by it in the forests of America. I have still a recollection of the happiness which I experienced during a night passed amidst dreary deserts, when my wood fire was half extinguished, my guide asleep, and my horses grazing at a distance — I have still a recollection, I say, of the happiness which I experienced when I heard the mingled melody of the winds and waters, as I reclined upon the earth, deep in the bosom of the forest. These murmurs, at one time feeble, at another more loud, increasing and decreasing every instant, made me occasionally start; and every tree was to me a sort of lyre, from which the winds extracted strains conveying ineffable delight.

At the present day I perceive that I am less sensible to these charms of nature, and I doubt whether the cataract of Niagara would cause the same degree of admiration in my mind, which it formerly inspired. When one is very young, Nature is eloquent in silence,

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because there is a super-abundance in the heart of man. All his futurity is before him (if my Aristarchus will allow me to use this expression) he hopes to impart his sensations to the world, and feeds himself with a thousand chimeras; but at a more advanced age, when the prospect, which we had before us, passes into the rear, and we are undeceived as to a host of illusions, then Nature, left to herself, becomes colder and less eloquent. "*Les jardins parlent peu.*"* To interest us at this period of life, it is necessary that we have the additional pleasure of society, for we are become less satisfied with ourselves. Absolute solitude oppresses us, and we feel a want of those conversations which are carried on, at night, in a low voice among friends.†

I did not leave Tivoli without visiting the house of the poet, whom I have just quoted. It faced the Villa of Mecænas, and there he greeted "*floribus et vino genium memorem brevis ævi.*"‡

* La Fontaine.

† Horace.

‡ There he greeted with flowers and wine the genius who reminds us of the brevity of life.

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The hermitage could not have been large, for it is situated on the very ridge of the hill; but one may easily perceive that it must have been very retired, and that every thing was commodious, though on a small scale. From the orchard, which was in front of the house, the eye wanders over an immense extent of country. It conveys, in all respects, the idea of a true retreat for a poet, whom little suffices, and who enjoys so much that does not belong to him—"*spatio brevi spem longam reseces.*"*

After all, it is very easy to be such a philosopher as Horace was. He had a house at Rome, and two country villas, the one at Utica, the other at Tivoli. He quaffed, with his friends, the wine which had been made during the consulate of Tully. His sideboard was covered with plate; and he said to the prime minister of the sovereign, who guided the destinies of the world: "I do not feel the wants of poverty; and if I wish for any thing more, you, Mecænas,

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* Closed in a narrow space of far extended hopes.
HORACE.

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will not refuse me." Thus situated, a man may very comfortably sing of Lalage, crown himself with short-lived lilies, talk of death while he is drinking Falernian, and give his cares to the winds.

I observe that Horace, Virgil, Tibullus, and Livy all died before Augustus, whose fate in this respect was the same as Louis XIV. experienced. Our great prince survived his cotemporaries awhile, and was the last who descended to the grave, as if to be certain that nothing remained behind him.

It will doubtless be a matter of indifference to you if I state the house of Catullus to be at Tivoli above that of Horace, and at present occupied by monks; but you will, perhaps, deem it more remarkable that Ariosto composed his "*fables comiques*"* at the same place in which Horace enjoyed the good things of this world. It has excited surprise that the author of Orlando Furioso, when living in retirement with the cardinal d'Est at Tivoli, should have fixed on

* Boileau.

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France as the subject of his divine extravaganzas, and France too when in a state of demi-barbarity, while he had under his eyes the grave remains and solemn memorials of the most serious and civilized nation upon earth. In other respects, the Villa d'Est is the only modern one, which has interested me, among the wrecks of proud habitations belonging to so many Emperors and Consuls. This illustrious house of Ferrara has had the singular good fortune of being celebrated by the two greatest poets of its age, and the two men, who possessed the most brilliant genius, to which modern Italy has given birth.

Piacciavi generosa Ercolea prole
Ornamento, e splendor del secol nostro,
Ippolito, etc.

It is the exclamation of a happy man, who returns thanks to the powerful house, which bestows favors on him, and of which he constitutes the delight. Tasso, who was more affecting, conveys in his invocation, the acknowledgments of a grateful but unfortunate man;

Tu magnanimo Alfonso, il qual ritogli, etc.

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He, who avails himself of power to assist neglected talent, makes a noble use of it. Ariosto and Hippolyto d'Est have left, in the valleys of Tivoli, a reputation which does not yield, in point of the charm conveyed by it, to that of Horace and Mecænas. But what is become of the protectors and the protected? At the moment that I write this letter, the house of Est is extinct, and its villa fallen into ruins. Such is the history of every thing belonging to this world.

Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens
*Uxor.**

I spent almost a whole day at this superb villa. I could not put a period to my admiration of the immense prospect, which I enjoyed from the high ground of the terraces. Below me were gardens, stretching to a considerable extent, and displaying great numbers of plane-trees and cypresses. Beyond these were the ruins of the house, which once belonged to

* Man must quit his estate, his house, and amiable wife.

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Mecænas, on the borders of the Anio.* On the opposite hill, which is on the other side of the river, is a wood of ancient olives and among these are the ruins of the villa once occupied by Varus.† A little further, to the left, rise the three mountains Monticelli, San Francesco, and Sant Angelo, and between the summits of these three neighbouring mountains appears the azure brow of old Socrate. In the horizon, and at the extremity of the Roman plains, describing a circle by the West and South, may be discerned the heights of Monte Fiascone, Rome, Civita Vecchia, Ostie, the sea, and Frascati, surmounted by the pines of Tusculum. Returning in search of Tivoli towards the East, the entire circumference of this immense prospect is terminated by Mount Ripoli, formerly occupied by the houses of Brutus and Atticus, at the foot of which is the Villa Adriana.

In the midst of this picture the Teverone

* Now the Teverone.

† The Varus, who was massacred with the legions in Germany. See the admirable description of Tacitus.

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descends rapidly towards the Tiber, and the eye may follow its source to the bridge, where the mausoleum of the family Plotia is erected in the form of a tower. The high road to Rome is also visible in the plain. It was the ancient Tiburtine way, then bordered by sepulchres; and at present, haystacks of a pyramidical form remind the spectator of the tombs, which they resemble in shape.

It would be difficult to find, in the rest of the world, a place more likely to beget powerful reflections. I do not speak of Rome, though the domes of that city are visible, by which I at once say much for a prospect; but I speak only of the district and its truly interesting remains. There you behold the house in which Mecænas, satiated with the luxuries of the world, died of a tedious complaint. Varus left this hill to shed his blood in the marshes of Germany. Cassius and Brutus abandoned these retreats, in order to overthrow their country. Under these pines of Frascati, Cicero pursued his studies. Adrian caused another Peneus to flow at the foot of that hill, and transported into this region the charms

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and recollections of the valley of Tempe. Towards this source of the Soltafare the queen of Palmyra ended her days in obscurity, and her city of a moment disappeared in the desert. It was here that king Latinus consulted the god Faunus in the forest of Albunea. It was here that Hercules had his temple, and the Sybil dictated her oracles. Those are the mountains of the ancient Sabines, and the plains of Latium, the land of Saturn and Rhea, the cradle of the golden age, sung by all the poets. In short, this is the smiling region of which French genius alone has been able to describe the graces, through the pencil of Poussin and Claude Lorrain.

I descended from the Villa d'Est about three o'clock in the afternoon, and crossed the Teverone over the bridge of Lupus, for the purpose of re-entering Tivoli by the Sabine gate. In passing through the grove of olives, which I before mentioned to you, I perceived a white chapel, dedicated to the Madonna Quintilanea, and built upon the ruins of the villa formerly belonging to Varus. It was Sunday—the door

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of the chapel was open, and I entered. I saw three altars disposed in the form of a cross; and on the middle one was a silver crucifix, before which burnt a lamp suspended from the roof. A solitary man, of most unhappy mien, was prostrate against a bench, and praying with such fervour that he did not even raise his eyes at the noise of my footsteps, as I approached. I felt what I have a thousand times experienced on entering a church—a sort of solace to the troubles of the heart, and an indescribable disgust as to every thing earthly. I sunk upon my knees at some distance from the man, and, inspired by the place, could not refrain from uttering this prayer:

"God of the traveller, who sufferest the pilgrim to adore thee in this humble asylum, built on the ruins of a palace once occupied by a great man of this world,—mother of affliction, who hast mercifully established thy worship in the inheritance of this unfortunate Roman, who died far from his country among barbarians—there are at the foot of your altar, only two prostrate sinners. Grant this stranger, who seems to

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be so profoundly humbled before your greatness, all that he implores of you, and let his prayer obtain for me the removal of my infirmities; so that we two Christians, who are unknown to each other, who have never met but for one instant during our lives, and who are about to part and no more see each other here below, may be astonished when we again meet at the foot of your throne in mutually owing part of our happiness to the intercession of this day, and to the miracles of your charity."

When I look at all the leaves, which are scattered over my table, I am alarmed at having trifled to such an extent, and hesitate as to sending such a letter. The fact is that I am aware of having said nothing to you, and of having forgotten a thousand things which I ought to have said. How happens it, for instance, that I have not spoken of Tusculum, and of that wonderful man, Cicero, who, according to Seneca, was the only genius ever produced by the Roman nation, equal to the vastness of its empire? "*Illud ingenium quod solum populus Romanus par imperio suo habuit.*" My voyage

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to Naples, my descent into the crater of Vesuvius,* my tours to Pompeia, Capua, Caserta, Solfatara, the Lake of Avernus, and the grotto of the Sibyl would interest you. Baiæ, where so many memorable scenes occurred, would alone deserve a volume. I could fancy that I still saw Bauli, where Agrippina's house stood, and where she used this sublime expression to the assassins sent by her son: "*Ventrem feri.*†" The isle of Nisida, which served as a retreat to Brutus, after the murder of Cæsar, the

* There is only some fatigue attendant on a descent into the crater of Vesuvius, but no danger, unless indeed a person should be surprised by a sudden eruption; and even in that case, if not blown into the air by the explosion of the matter, experience has proved that he may still save himself on the lava, which flows very slowly, but congeals so rapidly that a person can soon pass over it. I descended as far as one of the three small craters, formed in the middle of the large one, by the last eruption. The smoke, towards the side of the Torre del Annunciata was rather thick, and I made several abortive efforts to reach a light which was visible on the other side towards Caserte. In some parts of the mountain the cinders were burning-hot, two inches under the surface.

† Tacitus.

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bridge of Caligula, the admirable Piscina, and all those palaces, built in the sea, of which Horace speaks, well deserve that any one should stop a moment. Virgil has fixed or found in these places the beautiful fictions of his sixth Eneid. It was from hence that he wrote to Augustus these modest words, the only lines of prose, I believe, written by this great man, which have reached us: "*Ego vero frequentes a te litteras accipio. De Æneâ quidem meo, si mehercule jam dignum auribus haberem tuis, libenter mitterem; sed tanta inchoata res est, ut pene vitio mentis tantum opus ingressus mihi videar; cum præsertim, ut scis, alia quoque studia ad id opus multoque potiora impertiar.*"*

My pilgrimage to the tomb of Scipio Africanus is one of those from which I derived the highest satisfaction, though I failed in attaining the object, for which I undertook it. I had been told that the mausoleum of this famous Roman

* This fragment occurs in the Saturnalia of Macrobius, but I cannot point out the book, having no immediate means of reference. I believe, however, that it is the first.

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still existed, and that even the word *patria* was distinguishable on it, being all that remained of the inscription, which was asserted to have been carved upon it.

"*Ungrateful land, thou shalt not have my bones!*"

I went to Patria, the ancient Literum, but did not find the tomb.* I wandered, however, through the ruins of the house, which the greatest and most amiable men inhabited during his exile. I saw in imagination the conqueror of Hannibal walking on the sea-coast opposite to that of Carthage, and consoling himself for the injustice of Rome by the charms of friendship, and the consciousness of rectitude.

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* I was not only told that this tomb was in existence; but I have read the circumstances above mentioned in some travels, though I do not recollect by whom they were written. I doubt these statements, however, for the following reasons:

1st. It appears to me that Scipio, in spite of his just complaints against Rome, loved his country too much to have wished that such an inscription should be recorded on his tomb. It is contrary to all we know of the genius of the ancients.

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As to the modern Romans, Duclos appears to have been sarcastic when he calls them *the Italians of Rome*. I am of opinion that there is

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2dly. The inscription spoken of, is almost literally conceived in the terms of imprecation which Livy puts into the mouth of Scipio when he left Rome. May not this have given rise to the error?

3dly. Plutarch mentions that in the neighbourhood of Gaieta a bronze urn was found in a marble tomb, where the ashes of Scipio would most probably have been deposited, and that it bore an inscription very different to the one now under discussion.

The ancient Liternum, having the name *Patria*, this may have given birth to the report that the word *Patria* was the only remaining one of the inscription upon the tomb. Would it not, in fact, be a very singular coincidence that the town should be called Patria, and that the same word should also be found in this solitary state upon the monument of Scipio—unless indeed we suppose the one to have been taken from the other?

It is possible, nevertheless, that authors, with whom I am unacquainted, may have spoken of this inscription in a way which leaves no doubt. I grant that there is even an expression in Plutarch, apparently favourable to the opinion I am combatting. A man of great merit, and who is the dearer to me because he is very unfortunate, visited Patria much about the same time that I did. We have

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still among them the materials, requisite towards the formation of no common people. When the Italians are closely examined, great sense, courage, patience, genius, and deep traces of their ancient manners are to be discovered in them, with a kind of superior air, and some noble customs, which still partake of royalty. Before

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often conversed together about this celebrated place; but I am not quite sure whether he said that he had seen the *tomb* or the *word* (which would solve the difficulty) or whether he only grounded his arguments on popular tradition. For my own part I never found the tomb itself, but merely saw the ruins of the villa, which are of no great consequence.

Plutarch mentions some one to have stated that the tomb of Scipio was near Rome; but they evidently confounded the tomb of the *Scipios* with that of Scipio Africanus. Livy affirms that the latter was at Literum, and that it was surmounted by a statue, which a tempest had thrown down; adding that he himself had seen the statue. We know too from Seneca, Cicero, and Pliny, that the other tomb, namely the family vault of the Scipios, was actually in existence at one of the gates of Rome. It has been discovered during the pontificate of Pius VI, and the inscriptions, appertaining to it, were conveyed to the museum of the Vatican. Among the names of the members, composing the family of Scipio, which appear upon this monument of their consequence, that of Africanus is wanting.

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you condemn this opinion, which may appear to you singular, you must hear my reasons for it, and at present I have not time to send them.

What a number of observations I have to make upon Italian literature! Do you know that I never saw Count Alfieri but once in my life, and can you guess in what situation? I saw him put into his coffin. I was told that he was scarcely at all altered. His countenance appeared to me noble and grave; but death had doubtless imparted some additional degree of severity to it. The coffin being rather too short, a person bent his head over his breast, which caused a most disagreeable motion on the part of the body. Through the kindness of one who was very dear to Alfieri, and the politeness of a gentleman at Florence, who was also the Count's friend, I am in possession of some curious particulars as to the posthumous works, life and opinions of this celebrated man. Most of the public papers in France have given vague and mutilated accounts of the subject. Till I am able to communicate these particulars, I send you the epitaph which Alfieri made for his noble

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mistress, at the same time that he composed his own.

Hic sita est

Alf. . . . . E. . . . St. . . .

Alf. . . . Com. . . .

Genere. formâ. moribus.

Incomparabili. animi. candore.

Præclarissima.

A. Victorio. Alferio.

*Juxta. quem. sarcophago. uno.**

Tumulata. est.

Annorum. 26. spatio.

Ultra. res. omnes. dilecta.

Et. quasi. mortale. numine

Ab. ipso. constanter. habita.

Et. observata.

Vixit. annos . . . menses . . . dies . . .

Hannoniæ. montibus. nata.

Obiit . . . die . . . mensis . . .

Anno. Domini. M. D. C. C. C. . .†

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* Sic inscribendum me, ut opinor et opto, præmoriente; sed aliter, jubente Deo, aliter inscribendum:

Qui. juxta. eam. sarcophago. uno.

Conditus. erit. quamprimum.

† Here lies Eloisa E. St. Countess of Al, illustrious

The simplicity of this epitaph, and particularly of the note which accompanies it, appears to me very affecting.

For the present I have finished. I send you *a heap of ruins*—do what you like with them. In the description of the different objects, of which I have treated, I do not think that I have omitted any remarkable circumstance, unless it be that the Tiber is still the "*flavus Tiberinus*." It is said that it acquires its muddy appearance from the rains which fall in the mountains, whence it descends. I have often, while contemplating this discoloured river in the

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by her ancestry, the graces of her person, the elegance of her manners, and the incomparable candour of her mind; buried near Victor Alfieri and in the same grave; (*a*) he preferred her during twenty-six years to every thing in the world; and though mortal, she was constantly honoured and revered by him as if she had been a divinity. She was born at Mons, lived . . . . and died on . . . . .

(*a*) To be thus inscribed, if I die first, as I believe and hope I shall; but if God ordain it otherwise, the inscription to be thus altered, after the mention of Alfieri.

Who will soon be inclosed in the same tomb with her.

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serenest weather, represented to myself a life begun amidst storms. It is in vain that the remainder of its course is passed beneath a serener sky; the stream continues to be tainted with the waters of the tempest, which disturbed it at its source.

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VISIT TO MOUNT VESUVIUS.*

On the 5th of January, I left Naples at seven o'clock in the morning, and proceeded to Portici. The sun had chased away the clouds of night, but the head of Vesuvius is always wrapt in mist. I began my journey up the mountain with a *Cicerone*, who provided two mules, one for me and one for himself.

The ascent was at first on a tolerably wide road, between two platations of vines, which

* The following observations were not intended for the public eye, as will easily be perceived from the particular character of the reflections which they contain. They were principally written in pencil as I ascended to the crater of the volcano. I have not chosen to correct any part of this short journal, that I might not in any degree interfere with the truth of the narrative; but for the reasons mentioned the reader is requested to peruse it with indulgence.

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were trained upon poplars. I soon began to feel the cold wintry air, but kept advancing, and at length perceived a little below the vapours of the middle region, the tops of some trees. They were the elms of the hermitage. The miserable habitations of the vine-dressers were now visible on both sides, amidst a rich abundance of *Lachryma Christi*. In other respects, I observed a parched soil, and naked vines intermixed with pine-trees in the form of an umbrella, some aloes in the hedge, innumerable rolling stones, and not a single bird.

On reaching the first level ground of the mountain, a naked plain lay stretched before me, and I had also in view the two summits of Vesuvius—on the left the *Somma*, on the right the present mouth of the Volcano. These two heads were enveloped in pale clouds. I proceeded. On one side the Somma falls in, and on the other, I began to distinguish the hollows made in the cone of the volcano, which I was about to climb. The lava of 1766 and 1769 covered the plain, which I was crossing. It is a frightful smoky desert, where the lava, cast out like dross from a

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forge, displays its whitish scum upon a black ground, exactly resembling dried moss.

Leaving the cone of the volcano to the right and following the road on the left, I reached the foot of a hill, or rather a wall, formed of the lava, which overwhelmed Herculaneum. This species of wall is planted with vines on the borders of the plain, and on the opposite side is a deep valley, filled by a copse. The air now began to "bite shrewdly."

I climbed this hill in order to visit the hermitage which I perceived from the other side. The heavens lowered; the clouds descended and flew along the surface of the earth like grey smoke, or ashes driven before the wind. I began to hear a murmuring sound among the elms of the hermitage.

The hermit came forth to receive me, and held the bridle of my mule while I alighted. He was a tall man with an open countenance and good address. He invited me into his cell, and placed upon the table a repast of bread, apples and eggs. He sat down opposite to me, rested both his elbows on the table, and calmly

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began to converse while I eat my breakfast. The clouds were collected all round us, and no object could be distinguished through the windows of the hermitage. Nothing was heard in this dreary abyss of vapour, but the whistling of the wind, and the distant noise of the waves, as they broke upon the shores of Herculaneum. There was something singular in the situation of this tranquil abode of Christian hospitality—a small cell at the foot of a volcano and in the midst of a tempest.

The hermit presented to me the book in which strangers, who visit Vesuvius, are accustomed to make some memorandum. In this volume I did not find one remark worthy of recollection. The French indeed, with the good taste natural to our nation, had contented themselves with mentioning the date of their journey, or paying a compliment to the hermit for his hospitality. It would seem that this volcano had no very remarkable effect upon the visitors, which confirms me in the idea I some time since formed, namely, that grand objects and grand subjects are less capable of giving birth

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to great ideas than is generally supposed; for their grandeur being evident, all that is added, beyond this fact, becomes mere repetition. The "*nascetur ridiculus mus*" is true of all mountains.

I left the hermitage at half past two o'clock, and continued to ascend the hill of lava, on which I had before proceeded. On my left was the valley, which separated me from the *Somma*; on my right the plain of the cone. Not a living creature did I see in this horrible region but a poor, lean, sallow, half-naked girl, who was bending under a load of faggots, which she had cut on the mountain.

The clouds now entirely shut out the view; for the wind blew them upwards from the black plain, of which, if clear, I should have commanded the prospect, and caused them to pass over the lava road, upon which I was pursuing my way. I heard nothing but the sound of my mule's footsteps.

At length I quitted the hill, bending to the right, and re-descending into the plain of lava, which adjoins the cone of the volcano, and

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which I crossed lower down on my road to the hermitage; but even when in the midst of these calcined fragments, the mind can hardly form to itself an idea of the appearance which the district must assume, when covered with fire and molten metals by an eruption of Vesuvius. Dante had, perhaps, seen it when he describes in his Hell those showers of ever-burning fire, which descend slowly and in silence "*come di neve in Alpe senza vento.*"

"Arivammo ad una landa
Che dal suo letto ogni pianta rimove
.....
Lo spazzo er' un' arena arida e spessa
Sovra tutto 'l sabbion d'un cader lento
Pioven di fuoco dilatata, e falde,
Come di neve in Alpe senza vento.

Snow was here visible in several places, and I suddenly discovered at intervals Portici, Capri, Ischia, Pausilipi, the sea studded with the white sails of fishing boats, and the coast of the gulph of Naples, bordered with orange trees. It was a view of paradise from the infernal regions.

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On reaching the foot of the cone, we alighted from our mules. My guide gave me a long staff, and we began to climb the huge mass of cinders. The clouds closed in, the fog became more dense, and increasing darkness surrounded us.

Behold me now at the top of Vesuvius, where I seated myself at the mouth of the volcano, wrote down what had hitherto occurred, and prepared myself for a descent into the crater. The sun appeared, from time to time, through the mass of vapours, which enveloped the whole mountain, and concealed from me one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world, while it doubled the horrors of the place I was in. Vesuvius, thus separated by clouds from the enchanting country at its base, has the appearance of being placed in the completest desert, and the sort of terror, which it inspires, is in no degree diminished by the spectacle of a flourishing city at its foot.

I proposed to my guide that we should descend into the crater. He made several objections, but this was only to obtain a little more money; and we agreed upon a sum, which

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he received on the spot. He then took off his clothes, and we walked some time on the edge of the abyss, in order to find a part which was less perpendicular, and more commodious for our descent. The guide discovered one, and gave the signal for me to accompany him.—We plunged down.

Fancy us at the bottom of the gulph.* I despair of describing the chaos, which surrounded me. Let the reader figure to himself a basin, a thousand feet in circumference, and three hundred high, which forms itself into the shape of a funnel. Its borders or interior walls are furrowed by the liquid fire, which this basin has contained, and vomited forth. The projecting parts of these walls resemble those brick pillars, with which the Romans supported their enormous masonry. Large rocks are hanging down in different parts, and their fragments mixed with cinders into a sort of paste, cover the bottom of the abyss.

* There is fatigue, but very little danger attendant on a descent into the crater of Vesuvius, unless the investigator should be surprised by a sudden eruption.

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This bottom of the basin is ploughed and indented in various manners. Near the middle are three vents, or small mouths, recently opened, which discharged flames during the occupation of Naples by the French in 1798.

Smoke proceeds from different points of the crater, especially on the side towards *la Torre del Greco*. On the opposite side, towards Caseste, I perceived flame. When you plunge your hand into the cinders, you find them of a burning heat, several inches under the surface. The general colour of the gulph is black as coal; but Providence, as I have often observed, can impart grace at his pleasure even to objects the most horrible. The lava, in some places, is tinged with azure, ultra-marine, yellow, and orange. Rocks of granite are warped and twisted by the action of fire, and bent to their very extremities, so that they exhibit the semblance of the leaves of palms and acanthus. The volcanic matter having cooled on the rocks over which it flowed, many figures are thus formed, such as roses, girandoles, and ribbons. The rocks likewise assume the forms of plants

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and animals, and imitate the various figures, which are to be seen in agates. I particularly observed on a blueish rock, a white swan modelled in so perfect a manner that I could have almost sworn I beheld this beautiful bird sleeping on a placid lake, with its head bent under its wing, and its long neck stretched over its back like a roll of silk.

"Ad vada Meandri concinit albus olor."

I found here that perfect silence which I have, on other occasions, experienced at noon in the forests of America, when I have held my breath and heard nothing except the beating of my heart and temporal artery. It was only at intervals that gusts of wind, descending from the cone to the bottom of the crater, rustled through my clothes or whistled round my staff. I also heard some stones, which my guide kicked on one side, as he climbed through the cinders. A confused echo, similar to the jarring of metal or glass, prolonged the noise of the fall, and afterwards all was silent as death. Compare this gloomy silence with the dreadful thundering

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din, which shakes these very places, when the volcano vomits fire from its entrails, and covers the earth with darkness.

A philosophical reflection may here be made, which excites our pity for the sad state of human affairs. What is it, in fact, but the famous revolutions of Empires, combined with the convulsions of nature, that changes the face of the earth and the ocean? A happy circumstance would it at least be, if men would not employ themselves in rendering each other miserable, during the short time that they are allowed to dwell together. Vesuvius has not once opened its abyss to swallow up cities, without its fury surprising mankind in the midst of blood and tears. What are the first signs of civilization and improved humanity, which have been found, during our days, under the lava of the volcano? Instruments of punishment and skeletons in chains! *

Times alter, and human destinies are liable

* At Pompeia.

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to the same inconstancy. "Life," says a Greek song, "is like the wheels of a chariot."

Τροχὸς ἅρματος γὰρ οἷα
Βίοτος τρέχει κυλίθεις.

Pliny lost his life from a wish to contemplate, at a distance, the volcano, in the centre of which I was now tranquilly seated. I saw the abyss smoking round me. I reflected that a few fathoms below me was a gulph of fire.—I reflected that the volcano might at once disgorge its entrails, and launch me into the air with all the rocky fragments by which I was surrounded.

What Providence conducted me hither? By what chance did the tempests of the American ocean cast me on the plains of Lavinia? "*Lavinaque venit littora.*" I cannot refrain from returning to the agitations of this life, in which St. Augustine says that things are full of misery, and hope devoid of happiness. *Rem plenam miseriæ, spem beatitudinis inanem.* Born on the rocks of America, the first sound, which struck my ear on entering the world, was that

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of the sea, and on how many shores have I seen the same waves break, that find me here again! Who would have told me, a few years ago, that I should hear these wanderers moaning at the tombs of Scipio and Virgil, after they had rolled at my feet on the coast of England, or the strand of Canada? My name is in the hut of the savage of Florida, and in the hermit's book at Vesuvius. When shall I lay down, at the gate of my fathers, the pilgrim's staff and mantle?

"O patria! O Divum domus Ilium!

How do I envy the lot of those, who never quitted their native land, and have no adventures to record!

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A VISIT TO MONT BLANC.

I HAVE seen many mountains in Europe and America, and it has always appeared to me that in describing these monuments of nature, writers have gone beyond the truth. My last experience in this respect has not produced any change in my opinion. I have visited the valley of Chamouni, rendered famous by the labours of M. de Saussure; but I do not know whether the poet would there find the "*speciosa deserti*" which the mineralogist discovered. Be that as it may, I will simply describe the reflections, which I made during my journey. My opinion, however, is of so little consequence thas it cannot offend any one.

I left Geneva in dull cloudy weather, and reached Servoz at the moment that the sky was becoming clear. The crest of Mont Blanc, as it is termed, is not discoverable from this part of the country, but there is a distinct view of the

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snow-clad ridge called the dome. The Montées are here passed, and the traveller enters the valley of Chamouni. He proceeds under the glacier of the Bossons, the pyramids of which are seen through the firs and larches. M. Bourrit has compared this glacier, from its whiteness, and the great extent of its chrystals, to a fleet under sail. I would add in the midst of a gulph encircled with verdant forests.

I stopped at the village of Chamouni, and on the following day went to Montanvert, which I ascended in the finest weather. On reaching its summit, which is only a stage towards the top of Mont Blanc, I discovered what is improperly termed the Sea of Ice.

Let the Reader figure to himself a valley, the whole of which is occupied by a river. The mountains, near this valley, overhang the river in rocky masses, forming the natural spires of Dru, Bochard, and Charmoz. Further on, the valley and river divide themselves into two branches, of which the one waters the foot of a high mountain, called the Col du Geant or Giant's hill, and the other flows past the rocks

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called Jorasses. On the opposite side is a declivity, which commands a prospect of the valley of Chamouni. This declivity, which is nearly vertical, is almost entirely occupied by the portion of the sea or lake of ice, which is called the *glacier des bois*. Suppose then that a severe winter has occurred. The river, which fills the valley, through all its inflexions and declivities, has been frozen to the very bottom of its bed. The summits of the neighbouring mountains are loaded with ice and snow wherever the granite has been of a form sufficiently horizontal to retain the congealed waters. Such is the lake of ice, and such its situation. It is manifest that it is not a sea, and not a lake, but a river; just as if one saw the Rhine completely frozen.

When we have descended to the lake of ice, the surface, which appeared to be smooth and entire while surveyed from the heights of Montanvert, displays a number of points and cavities. The peaks of ice resemble the craggy forms of the lofty cliffs, which on all sides overhang them. They are like a relief in white marble to the neighbouring mountains.

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Let us now speak of mountains in general. There are two modes of seeing them, with and without clouds. These form the principal character of the Alps.

When clouded, the scene is more animated, but it is obscure, and often so confused that one can hardly distinguish its features. The clouds clothe the rocks in a thousand ways. I have seen a bald crag at Servoz, across which a cloud obliquely passed like the ancient *toga*; and I could have fancied I beheld a colossal statue of a Roman. In another quarter the cultivated part of the mountain appeared; but a barrier of vapour obstructed the view from my station, and below it black continuations of the rocks peeped through, imitating the Chimera, the Sphinx, the heads of the Anubis, and various forms of monsters and gods, worshipped by the Egyptians.

When the clouds are dispersed by the wind, the mountains appear to be rapidly flying behind this light curtain, alternately hiding and discovering themselves. At one time, a spot of verdure suddenly displayed itself through the

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opening of a cloud, like an island suspended in the Heavens; at another a rock slowly disrobed itself, and gradually pierced through the dense vapour like a phantom. On such an occasion, the melancholy traveller hears only the rustling of the wind among the pines, and the roaring of the torrents which fall into the glaciers, mingled at intervals with the loud fall of an *avalanche,** and sometimes the whistle of the affrighted marmot, which has seen the hawk of the Alps sailing in the air.

When the sky is without clouds, and the ampitheatre of the mountains entirely displayed to view, one circumstance is particularly deserving of notice. The summits of the mountains, as they tower into the lofty regions, present to the eye a purity of delineation, a neatness of plan and profile, which objects in the plain do not possess. These angular heights, under the transparent dome of Heaven, resemble beautiful specimens of natural history, such as fine trees of coral, or stalactites inclosed in a globe of the

* The sudden descent of an enormous mass of snow from the mountain into the valley.

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purest chrystal. The mountaineer searches in these elegant appearances for objects, which are familiar to him; hence the names of the Mules, the Charmoz, or the Chamois, and the appellations borrowed from religion, the heights of the cross, the rock of the altar, the glacier of the pilgrims—simple and artless denominations, which prove that if man be incessantly occupied in providing for his wants, he every where delights to dwell upon subjects which offer consolation.

As to mountain trees, I shall only mention the pine, the larch, and the fir, because they constitute, as it were, the only decoration of the Alps.

The pine by its shape calls to mind the beauties of architecture, its branches having the elegance of the pyramid, and its trunk that of the column. It resembles also the form of the rocks, among which it flourishes. I have often, upon the ridges and advanced cornices of the mountains, confounded it with the pointed peaks or beetling cliffs. Beyond the hill of Balme, at the descent of the glacier de Trien,

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occurs a wood of pines, firs, and larches, which surpass all their congeners in point of beauty. Every tree in this family of giants has existed several ages, and the Alpine tribe has a king, which the guides take care to point out to travellers. It is a fir, which might serve as a mast for the largest man of war. The monarch alone is without a wound—while all his subjects round him are mutilated. One has lost his head; another, part of his arms; a third, has been rent by lightning, and a fourth blackened by the herdsman's fire. I particularly noticed twins which had sprung from the same trunk, and towered aloft together. They were alike in height, form, and age; but the one was full of vigour, and the other in a state of decay. They called to my mind these impressive lines of Virgil:

"Daucia, Laride Thymberque, simillima proles,
"Indiscreta suis, gratusque parentibus error,
"Ai nunc dura dedit vobis discrimina Pallas."

"Oh Laris and Thimber, twin sons of Daucus, and so much resembling each other, that even your parents could not discern the

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difference, and felt delight in the mistakes which you caused! But *death* has caused a mournful difference between you."

I may add that the pine announces the solitude and indigence of the mountain, on which it is found. It is the companion of the poor Savoyard, of whose lot it partakes. Like him it grows and dies upon inaccessible eminences, where its posterity perpetuates it, to perish equally unknown. It is on the larch that the mountain bee gathers that firm and savoury honey, which mixes so agreeably with the raspberries and cream of Montaubert. The gentle murmuring of the wind among the pines has been extolled by pastoral poets, but when the gale is violent, the noise resembles that of the sea, and you sometimes actually think that you hear the roaring billows of the ocean in the middle of the Alps. The odour of the pine is aromatic and agreeable. To me it has a peculiar charm; for I have smelt it at sea, when more than twenty leagues from the coast of Virginia. It likewise always awakens in my mind the idea of that new world, which was

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announced to me by a balmy air—of that fine region and those brilliant lakes, where the perfume of the forest was borne to me upon the matin breeze; and as if every thing was connected in our remembrance, it also calls to mind the sentiments of regret and hope which alternately occupied my thoughts, when, leaning over the side of the vessel, I thought of that country which I had lost, and those deserts, which I was about to explore.

But to arrive finally at my peculiar opinion as to mountains, I will observe that as there can be no beautiful landscape without a mountainous horizon, so there is no place calculated for an agreeable residence, and no landscape which is satisfactory to the eye and heart where a deficiency of space and air exists. Still the idea of great sublimity is attached to mountainous views, and with great justice as far as regards the grandeur of objects; but if it be proved that this grandeur, though real in its effects, is not properly perceived by the senses, what becomes of the sublimity?

It is with the monuments of nature as with

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those of art. To enjoy their beauty, a person must be stationed at the true point of perspective. Without this the forms, the colouring, and the proportions entirely disappear. In the interior of mountains, when the object itself is almost touched, and the field, in which the optics move, is quite confined, the dimensions necessarily lose their grandeur—a circumstance so true that one is continually deceived as to the heights and distances. I appeal to travellers whether Mont Blanc appeared to them very lofty from the valley of Chamounie. An immense lake in the Alps has often the appearance of a small pond. You fancy a few steps will bring you to the top of an acclivity, which you are three hours in climbing. A whole day hardly suffices to effect your escape from a defile, the extremity of which you seemed at first almost to touch with your hand. This grandeur of mountains, therefore, so often dwelt upon, has no reality, except in the fatigue which it causes. As to the landscape, it is not much grander to the eye than an ordinary one.

But these mountains, which lose their ap-

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parent grandeur when they are too nearly approached by the spectator, are nevertheless, so gigantic that they destroy what would otherwise constitute their ornament. Thus by contrary laws, every thing is diminished, both as a whole and in its separate parts. If nature had made the trees a hundred times larger on the mountains than in the plains, if the rivers and cascades poured forth waters a hundred times more abundant, these grand woods and grand waters might produce most majestic effects upon the extended face of the earth; but such is by no means the case. The frame of the picture is enlarged beyond all bounds, while the rivers, the forests, the villages and the flocks preserve their accustomed proportions. Hence there is no affinity between the whole and the part, between the theatre and its decorations. The plan of the mountains being vertical, a scale is thereby supplied, with which the eye examines and compares the objects it embraces, in spite of a wish to do otherwise, and these objects one by one proclaim their own pettiness when thus brought to the test. For example, the loftiest pines can

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hardly be distinguished from the vallies, or look only like flakes of soot dashed on the spot. The tracks of pluvial waters, in these black and gloomy woods, have the appearance of yellow parallel stripes, while the largest torrents and steepest cataracts resemble small streams, or bluish vapours.

Those, who have discovered diamonds, topazes and emeralds in the glaciers, are more fortunate than I was; for my imagination was never able to perceive these treasures. The snow at the foot of the *Glacier des Bois*, mixed with the dust of the granite, seemed to me like ashes. The Lake of Ice might be taken, in several quarters, for a lime or plaister pit. Its crevices were the only parts which afforded any prismatic colours, and when the masses of ice rest on the rock, they look like so much common glass.

This white drapery of the Alps has a great inconvenience too, not yet mentioned. It makes every thing around it look black, nay it even darkens the azure sky; nor must it be supposed that the spectator is remunerated for this dis-

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agreeable effect by the fine contrast with the colour of the snow itself. The tint, which the neighbouring mountains confer upon it, is lost to a person stationed at their feet. The splendour, with which the setting sun gilds the summits of the Alps in Savoy, is only seen by the inhabitants of Lausanne. As to the traveller, who passes through the valley of Chamouni, it is in vain that he expects to witness this brilliant spectacle. He sees over his head, as if through a funnel, a small portion of sky which is a dingy blue in point of colour, and unmixed with any golden or purple marks of the setting luminary. Wretched district, upon which the sun hardly casts a look even at noon through its frozen barrier!

May I be allowed to utter a trivial truth for the purpose of making myself better understood? In a painting—a back ground is necessary, and for this purpose a curtain is often resorted to. In nature the sky is the curtain of the landscape; if that be wanting in the back ground, every thing is confused and without effect. Now the mountains, when a person is too near them,

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obstruct a view of the greater part of the sky. There is not air enough round them; they cast a shade upon each other, and interchange the darkness which perpetually prevails among the cavities of the rocks. To know whether mountain landscapes have so decisive a superiority, it is only requisite to consult painters. You will see that they have always thrown eminences into the distance, thereby opening to the eye a view of woods and plains.

There is only one period at which mountains appear with all their natural sublimity; namely, by moon-light. It is the property of this twilight planet to impart only a single tint without any reflection, and to increase objects by isolating the masses, as well as by causing that gradation of colours to disappear, which connect the different parts of a picture. Hence the more bold and decided the features of a rock or mountain, and the more hardness there is in the design, so much the more will the moon bring out the lines of shade. It is for this reason that Roman architecture, like the contour of mountains, is so beautiful by moon-light.

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The *grand*, therefore, and consequently that species of sublimity, to which it gives birth, disappears in the interior of a mountainous country. Let us now see whether the *graceful* is to be found there in a more eminent degree.

The valleys of Switzerland create at first a sort of ecstacy; but it must be observed that they are only found so agreeable by comparison. Undoubtedly the eye, when fatigued by wandering over sterile plains, or promontories covered with reddish lichen, experiences great delight in again beholding a little verdure and vegetation. But in what does this verdure consist? In some pitiful willows, in some patches of oats and barley, which grow with difficulty, and are long in ripening, with some wild trees, which bear late and bitter fruit. If a vine contrives to vegetate in some spot with a Southern aspect, and carefully protected from the Northern blast, this extraordinary fecundity is pointed out to you as an object of admiration. If you ascend the neighbouring heights, the great features of the mountains cause the miniature of the valley to disappear. The cottages become hardly visible,

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and the cultivated parts look like so many patterns on a draper's card.

Much has been said of mountain flowers—the violet, which is gathered on the borders of the glaciers, the strawberry which reddens in the snow, &c but these are imperceptible wonders, which produce no effect. The ornament is too small for the colossus, to which it belongs.

It appears that I am altogether unfortunate, for I have not been able to discover in these cottages, which have been rendered famous by the enchanting imagination of J. J. Rousseau, any thing but miserable huts filled with the ordure of cattle, and the smell of cheese and fermented milk. I found the inhabitants of them to be forlorn mountaineers, who considered themselves exiles, and longed for the luxury of descending into the valleys.

Small birds, flying from one frozen cliff to another, with here and there a couple of ravens or a hawk, scarcely give animation to the rocky snow-clad scenery, where a fall of rain is almost always the only object in motion, which salutes your sight. Happy is the man in this region,

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who hears the storm announced from some old fir by the woodpecker. Yet this melancholy indication of life makes my mind feel still more sensibly the general death around me. The chamois, the bouquetins, and the white rabbits are almost entirely destroyed. Even marmots are becoming scarce; and the little Savoyard is threatened with the loss of his treasure. The wild animals are succeeded on the summits of the Alps by herds of cattle, which regret that they are not allowed to enjoy the plain as well as their masters. They have, however, when lying in the coarse herbage of the Caux district, the merit of enlivening the scene, and the more so because they recal to mind the descriptions of the ancient poets.

Nothing remains but to speak of the sensations experienced among mountains, and these are to me very painful. I cannot be happy where I witness on all sides the most assiduous labour, and the most unheard-of toil, while an ungrateful soil refuses all recompense. The mountaineer, who feels his misfortune, is more sincere than travellers. He calls the plains the *good country*,

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and does not pretend that the rocks, moistened by the sweat of his brow, but not thereby rendered more fertile, are the most beautiful and best of God's dispensations. If he appears highly attached to his mountain, this must be reckoned among the marvellous connection, which the Almighty has established, between our troubles, the object which causes them, and the places, in which we experienced them. It is also attributable to the recollections of infancy, to the first sentiments of the heart, to the pleasures and even the rigours of the paternal habitation. More solitary than the rest of mankind, more serious from a habit of enduring hardships, the mountaineer finds support in his own sentiments. The extreme love of his country does not arise from any charm in the district which he inhabits, but from the concentration of his ideas, and the limited extent of his wants.

Mountains, however, are said to be the abode of contemplation.—I doubt this. I doubt whether any one can indulge in contemplation, when his walk is fatiguing, and when the attention he is obliged to bestow on his steps, entirely

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occupies his mind. The lover of solitude, who gazed with open mouth at chimeras,* while he was climbing Montanvert, might well fall into some pits, like the astrologer, who pretended to read over head when he could not see his feet.

I am well aware that poets have fixed upon valleys and woods as the proper places to converse with the Muses. For instance let us hear what Virgil says.

" Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes,
" Flumina amem, sylvasque inglorius."

From this quotation it is evident that he liked the plains, *" rura mihi ;"* he looked for agreeable, smiling, ornamented valleys, *" vallibus amnes ;"* he was fond of rivers, *flumina amem,'* (not torrents) and forests, in which he could pass his life without the parade of glory, *" sylvasque inglorius."* These *sylvæ* are beautiful groves of oaks, elms, and beeches, not melancholy woods of fir ; for he does not say in this passage, *" et ingenti ramorum protegat umbrâ,"* that he wishes to be enveloped in thick shade.

* La Fontaine.

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And where does he wish that this valley shall be situated? In a place, which will inspire happy recollections and harmonious names, with traditions of the muses and of history:

" O ubi campi
" Sperchiusque, et virginibus bacchata Lacænis
" Taygeta! O qui me gelidis vallibus Hœmi
" Sistat!"

" Oh, where are the fields, and the river Sperchius, and Mount Taygetus, frequented by the virgins of Laconia? Oh, who will convey me to the cool valleys of Mount Hœmus?" He would have cared very little for the valley of Chamouni, the glacier of Taconay, the greater or lesser Forasse, the peak of Dru, and the rock of Tête-Noir.

Nevertheless, if we are to believe Rousseau, and those who have adopted his errors without inheriting his eloquence, when a person arrives at the summit of a mountain, he is transformed into a new man. " On high mountains," says Jean Jacques, " Meditation assumes a grand and sublime character, in unison with the objects that strike us. The mind feels an indescribable

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placid delight, which has nothing earthly or sensual in it. It appears to raise itself above the abode of mankind, leaving there all low and terrestrial feelings. I doubt whether any agitation of the soul can be so violent as to resist the effects of a lengthened stay in such a situation."

Would to Heaven that it were really thus! How charming the idea of being able to shake off our cares by elevating ourselves a few feet above the plains! But unfortunately the soul of man is independent of air and situation. Alas! a heart, oppressed with pain, would be no less heavy on the heights than in the valley. Antiquity, which should always be referred to when accuracy of feeling is the subject of discussion, was not of Rousseau's opinion as to mountains; but, on the contrary, represents them as the abode of desolation and sorrow. If the lover of Julia forgot his chagrin among the rocks of Valais, the husband of Eurydice fed the source of his grief upon the mountains of Thrace. In spite of the talents possessed by the philosopher of Geneva, I doubt whether the voice of Saint Preux will be heard by so many future ages as the lyre of Orpheus. Œdipus,

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that perfect model of Royal calamity, that grand epitome of all earthly evils, likewise sought deserted eminences. He mounted towards Heaven to interrogate the Gods respecting human misery. We have other examples supplied by antiquity, and of a more beautiful as well as more sacred description. The holy writings of the inspired, who better knew the nature of man than the profane sages, always describe those who are particularly unhappy, the prophets and our Saviour himself, as retiring, in the day of affliction, to the high places. The daughter of Jeptha, before her death, asked her father's permission to go and bewail her virginity on the mountains of Judea. Jeremiah said that he would go to the mountains for the purpose of weeping and groaning. It was on the Mount of Olives that Christ drank the cup, which was filled with all the afflictions and tears of mankind.

It is worthy of observation that in the most rational pages of that writer, who stepped forward as the defender of fixed morality, it is still not difficult to find traces of the spirit of the age in which he lived. This supposed change of our internal dispositions, according to the nature

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of the place which we inhabited, belonged secretly to the system of materialism; which Rousseau affected to combat. The soul was considered to be a sort of plant, subject to the variations of the atmosphere, and agitated or serene in conformity with this. But could Jean Jacques himself really believe in this salutary influence of the higher regions? Did not this unfortunate man himself carry with him his passions and his misery to the mountains of Switzerland?

There is only one situation, in which it is true that mountains inspire an oblivion of earthly troubles. This is when a man retires far from the world to employ his days in religious excercises. An anchorite, who devotes himself to the relief of human nature, or a holy hermit, who silently meditates on the omnipotence of God, may find peace and joy upon barren rocks; but it is not the tranquillity of the place which passes into the soul of the recluse; it is, on the contrary, his soul, which diffuses serenity through the region of storms.

It has ever been an instinctive feeling of mankind to adore the Eternal on high places.

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The nearer we are to Heaven, the less distance there seems to be for our prayers to pass before they reach the throne of God. The patriarchs sacrificed on the mountains; and as if they had borrowed from their altars their idea of the Divinity, they called him the Most High. Traditions of this ancient mode of worship remained among Christian nations; whence our mountains, and in default of them our hills were covered with monasteries and abbeys. From the centre of a corrupt city, man, who was perhaps proceeding to the commission of some crime, or who was at least in pursuit of some vanity, perceived, on raising his eyes, the altars upon the neighbouring heights. The cross, displaying at a distance the standard of poverty to the eyes of luxury, recalled to the rich ideas of affliction and commiseration. Our poets little understood their art, when they ridiculed these emblems of Mount Calvary, with the institutions and retreats, which bring to our recollection those of the East, the manners of the hermits of the Thebaid, the miracles of our divine religion, and the events of times, the antiquity of which is not effaced by that of Homer.

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But this belongs to another class of ideas and sentiments, and bears no reference to the general question, which we are examining. After having censured mountains, it is only just to conclude by saying something in their favour. I have already observed that they are essential to a fine landscape, and that they ought to form the chain in the back ground of a picture. Their hoary heads, their lank sides, and gigantic members, though hideous when contemplated, are admirable when rounded by the vapour of the horizon, and coloured in a melting gilded light. Let us add too, if it be wished, that mountains are the source of rivers, the last asylum of liberty in times of despotism, as well as an useful barrier against invasion, and the evils of war. All I ask is that I may not be compelled to admire the long list of rocks, quagmires, crevices, holes, and contortions of the Alpine vallies. On this condition I will say there are mountains, which I should visit again with much pleasure—for instance those of Greece and Judea.*

* This letter was written prior to M. de Chateaubriand's recent Travels in the Holy Land.

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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

ENGLAND.

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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

ENGLAND.

If man were not attached, by a sublime instinct to his native country, his most natural condition in the world would be that of a traveller. A certain degree of restlessness is for ever urging him beyond his own limits. He wishes to see every thing, and is full of lamentations after he has seen every thing. I have traversed several regions of the globe, but I confess that I paid more attention to the deserts than to mankind, among whom, after all, I often experience solitude.

I sojourned only for a short period among the Germans, Spaniards, and Portuguese; but I lived a considerable time in England; and as the inhabitants of that kingdom constitute the

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only people who dispute the empire of the French,* the least account of them becomes interesting.

Erasmus is the most ancient traveller, with whom I am acquainted, that speaks of the English. He states that, during the reign of Henry VIII. he found London inhabited by barbarians, whose huts were full of smoke. A long time afterwards, Voltaire, wanting to discover a perfect philosopher, was of opinion that he had found this character among the Quakers upon the banks of the Thames. During his abode there the taverns were the places, at which the men of genius, and the friends of rational liberty assembled. England, however, is known to be the country, in which religion is less discussed, though more respected than in any other; and where the idle questions, by which the tranquillity of empires is disturbed, obtain less attention than any where else.

* This was written at the time that all the continental powers of Europe had been conquered by the arms of Napoleon, and had acknowledged his title.

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It appears to me that the secret of English manners, and their way of thinking is to be sought in the origin of this people. Being a mixture of French and German blood, they form a link of the chain by which the two nations are united. Their policy, their religion, their martial habits, their literature, arts, and national character appear to me a medium between the two. They seem to have united, in some degree, the brilliancy, grandeur, courage, and vivacity of the French with the simplicity, calmness, good sense, and bad taste of the Germans.

Inferior to us in some respects, they are superior in several others, particularly in every thing relative to commerce and wealth. They excel us also in neatness; and it is remarkable that a people, apparently of a heavy turn, should have, in their furniture, dress, and manufactures, an elegance in which we are deficient. It may be said of the English that they employ in the labours of the hand the delicacy, which we devote to those of the mind.

The principal failing of the English nation is pride; which is indeed the fault of all man-

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kind. It prevails at Paris as well as London, but modified by the French character, and transformed into self-love. Pride, in its pure state, appertains to the solitary man, who is not obliged to make any sacrifice; but he, who lives much with his equals, is forced to dissimulate and conceal his pride under the softer and more varied forms of vanity. The passions are, in general, more sudden and determined among the English; more active and refined among the French. The pride of the former makes him wish to crush every thing at once by force; the self-love of the other slowly undermines what it wishes to destroy. In England a man is hated for a vice, or an offence, but in France such a motive is not necessary; for the advantages of person or of fortune, success in life, or even a *bon mot* will be sufficient. This animosity, which arises from a thousand disgraceful causes, is not less implacable than the enmity founded on more noble motives. There are no passions so dangerous as those, which are of base origin; for they are conscious of their own baseness, and are thereby rendered furious. They endeavour

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to conceal it under crimes, and to impart, from its effects, a sort of apalling grandeur, which is wanting from principle. This the French revolution sufficiently proved.

Education begins early in England. Girls are sent to school during the tenderest years. You sometimes see groups of these little ones, dressed in white mantles, straw-hats tied under the chin with a ribband, and a basket on the arm which contains fruit and a book, all with downcast eyes, blushing if looked at. When I have observed our French female children dressed in their antiquated fashion, lifting up the train of their gowns, looking at every one with effrontery, singing love-sick airs, and taking lessons in declamation, I have thought with regret of the simplicity and modesty of the little English girls. A child without innocence is a flower without perfume.

The boys also pass their earliest years at school, where they learn Greek and Latin. Those who are destined for the church, or a political career, go to the universities of Cambridge and Oxford. The first is particularly devoted to

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mathematics, in memory of Newton; but the English, generally speaking, do not hold this study in high estimation; for they think it very dangerous to good morals, when carried too far. They are of opinion that the sciences harden the heart, deprive life of its enchantments, and lead weak minds to atheism, the sure road to all other crimes. On the contrary, they maintain that the *belles lettres* render life delightful, soften the soul, fill us with faith in the Divinity, and thus conduce, through the medium of religion, to the practice of all the virtues.*

When an Englishman attains manhood, agriculture, commerce, the army and navy, religion and politics, are the pursuits of life open to him. If he chuses to be what they call a gentleman farmer, he sells his corn, makes agricultural experiments, hunts foxes and shoots partridges in autumn, eats fat geese at Christmas, sings "Oh the roast beef of old England," grumbles about the present times, and boasts of the past which he thought no better at the moment, above all, inveighs against the minister

* Gibbon.

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and the war for raising the price of port-wine, and finally goes inebriated to bed, intending to lead the same life on the following day.

The army, though so brilliant during the reign of Queen Anne, had fallen into a state of discredit, from which the present war has raised it. The English were a long time before they thought of turning their principal attention to their naval force. They were ambitious of distinguishing themselves as a continental power. It was a remnant of ancient opinions, which held the pursuits of commerce in contempt. The English have, like ourselves, always had a species of physiognomy, by which they might be distinguished. Indeed, these two nations are the only ones in Europe, which properly deserve the appellation. If we had our Charlemagne, they had their Alfred. Their archers shared the renown of the Gallic infantry; their Black Prince rivalled our Duguesclin, and their Marlborough our Turenne. Their revolutions and ours keep pace with each other. We can boast of the same glory; but we must deplore the same crimes and the same misfortunes.

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Since England is become a maritime power, she has displayed her peculiar genius in this new career. Her navy is distinguished from all others in the world by a discipline the most singular. The English sailor is an absolute slave, who is sent on board a vessel by force, and obliged to serve in spite of himself. The man, who was so independent while a labourer, appears to lose all the rights of freedom from the moment that he becomes a mariner. His superiors oppress him by a yoke the most galling and humiliating.* Whence arises it that men of so lofty a disposition should submit to such tyrannical ill-usage? It is one of the miracles of a free government. In England the name of the law is almighty. When the law has spoken, resistance is at an end.

I do not believe that we should be able, or indeed that we ought to introduce the English system into our navy. The French Seaman,

* The reader will bear in mind, while contemplating this overcharged picture of our gallant navy, that the artist, by whom it is painted, is naturalized in France, though not born there.—EDITOR.

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who is frank, generous, and spirited, wishes to approach his commander, whom he regards still more as his comrade than his captain. Moreover, a state of such absolute servitude, as that of the English sailor, can only emanate from civil authority; hence it is to be feared that it would be despised by the French; for unfortunately the latter rather obeys the man than the law, and his wishes are more private than public ones.

Our naval officers have hitherto been better instructed than those of England. The latter merely knew their manœuvres, while ours were mathematicians, and men of science in every respect. Our true character has, in general, been displayed in our navy, where we have appeared as warriors, and as men improved by study. As soon as we have vessels, we shall regain our birthright on the ocean, as well as upon land. We shall also be able to make further astronomical observations, and voyages round the world; but as to our becoming a complete commercial nation, I believe we may renounce the idea at once. We do every thing by genius and

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inspiration; but we seldom follow up our projects. A great financier, or a great man as to commercial enterprize may appear among us; but will his son pursue the same career? Will he not think of enjoying the fortune bequeathed by his father, instead of augmenting it? With such a disposition, no nation can become a mercantile one. Commerce has always had among us an indescribable something of the poetic and fabulous in it, similar to the rest of our manners. Our manufactures have been created by enchantment; they acquired a great degree of celebrity, but they are now at an end. While Rome was prudent, she contented herself with the Muses and Jupiter, leaving Neptune to Carthage. This God had, after all, only the second empire, and Jupiter hurled his thunders on the ocean as well as elsewhere.

The English clergy are learned, hospitable, and generous. They love their country, and exert their powerful services in support of the laws. In spite of religious differences, they received the French emigrant clergy with truly christian charity. The university of Oxford

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printed, at its expense, and distributed *gratis* to our poor priests, a new Latin Testament, according to the Roman version, with these words: "*For the use of the Catholic clergy exiled on account of their religion.*" Nothing could be more delicate or affecting. It was doubtless a beautiful spectacle for philosophy to witness, at the close of the eighteenth century, the hospitality of the English clergy towards the Catholic priests; nay, further, to see them allow the public exercise of this religion, and even establish some communities. Strange vicissitude of human opinions and affairs! The cry of "*The Pope, the Pope!*" caused the revolution during the reign of Charles the First; and James the Second lost his crown for protecting the Catholic religion.

They, who take fright at the very name of this faith, know but very little of the human mind. They consider it such as it was in the days of fanaticism and barbarity; without reflecting that, like every other institution, it assumes the character of the ages, through which it passes.

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The English clergy are, however, not without faults. They are too negligent with regard to their duties, and too fond of pleasure; they give too many balls, and mix too much in the gaieties of life. Nothing is more revolting to a stranger than to see a young minister of religion awkwardly leading a pretty woman down an English country-dance. A priest should be entirely a divine; and virtue should reign around him. He should retire into the mysterious recesses of the temple, appearing but seldom among mankind, and then only for the purpose of relieving the unhappy. It is by such conduct that the French clergy obtain our respect and confidence; whereas they would soon lose both the one and the other, if we saw them seated at our sides on festive occasions and familiarizing themselves with us; if they had all the vices of the times, and were for a moment suspected of being feeble fragile mortals like ourselves.

The English display great pomp in their religious festivals. They are even beginning to introduce paintings into their churches; having at length discovered that religion without wor-

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ship is only the dream of a cold enthusiast, and that the imagination of man is a faculty which must be nourished as well as his reason.

The emigration of the French clergy has in a great degree tended to propagate these ideas; and it may be remarked that by a natural return towards the institutions of their forefathers, the English have, for some time, laid the scene of their dramas and other literary works in the ages, during which the catholic religion prevailed among them. Of late, this faith has been carried to London by the exiled priests of France; and appears to the English, precisely as in their romances, through the medium of noble ruins and powerful recollections. All the world crowded with anxiety to hear the funeral oration over a French lady, delivered by an emigrant bishop at London in a stable.

The English church has reserved for the dead the principal part of those honours, which the Roman religion awards to them. In all the great towns there are persons, called undertakers, who manage the funerals. Sometimes you read on the signs over their shops, "*Coffin maker to*

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the King," or "*Funerals performed here*," as if it was a theatrical representation. It is indeed true that representations of grief have long constituted all the marks of it, which are to be found among mankind, and when nobody is disposed to weep over the remains of the deceased, tears are bought for the occasion. The last duties paid to the departed would, however, be of a sad complexion indeed, if stripped of the marks of religion; for religion has taken root at the tomb, and the tomb cannot evade her. It is right that the voice of hope should speak from the coffin; it is right that the priest of the living God should escort the ashes of the dead to their last asylum. It may be said, on such an occasion, that Immortality is marching at the head of Death.

The political bent of the English is well known in France, but most people are ignorant as to the parties, into which the parliament is divided. Besides that of the minister, and the one in opposition to it, there is a third, which may be called *The Anglicans*, at the head of which is Mr. Wilberforce. It consists of about

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a hundred members, who rigidly adhere to ancient manners, particularly in what respects religion. Their wives are clothed like quakers; they themselves affect great simplicity, and give a large part of their revenue to the poor. Mr. Pitt was of this sect, and it was through their influence that he was elevated to, as well as maintained in the office of Prime Minister; for by supporting one side or the other, they are almost said to constitute a majority and decide the questions discussed. When the affairs of Ireland were debated, they took alarm at the promises which Mr. Pitt made to the Catholics, and threatened to pass over to the opposition, upon which the minister made an able retreat from office, in order to preserve the friends, with whom he agreed on most essential points, and escape from the difficulties, into which circumstances had drawn him. Having acted thus, he was sure not to offend the Anglicans, even if the bill passed; and if, on the contrary, it was rejected, the catholics of Ireland could not accuse him of breaking his engagement.—It has been asked in France whether Mr. Pitt lost his credit with his

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place, but a single fact will be the best answer to this question. He still sits in the House of Commons. When he shall be transferred to the upper house, his political career will be at an end.

An erroneous opinion is entertained by the French as to the influence of the party, in England, called the opposition, which is completely fallen in the opinion of the public. It possesses neither great talents, nor real patriotism. Mr. Fox himself is no longer of any use to it, having lost all his eloquence from age and excesses of the table. It is certain that his wounded vanity, rather than any other motive, induced him, for so long a time, to discontinue his attendance in Parliament.

The bill, which excludes from the House of Commons every person in holy orders, has been also misinterpreted at Paris. It is not known that the only object of this measure was to expel Horne Tooke, a man of genius, and a violent enemy of government, who had formerly been in orders, but had abandoned his cloth; who had also been a supporter of power even to the

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extent of drawing upon himself an attack from the pen of Junius; and finally became a proselyte of liberty, like many others.

Parliament lost in Mr. Burke one of its most distinguished members. He detested the French Revolution, but to do him justice, no Englishman ever more sincerely loved the French as individuals, or more applauded their valour and their genius. Though he was not rich, he had founded a school for the expatriated youth of our nation, where he passed whole days in admiring the genius and vivacity of these children. He used often to relate an anecdote on the subject. Having introduced the son of an English nobleman to be educated at this school, the young orphans proposed to play with him, but the lord did not chuse to join in their sports. "I don't like the French," said he frequently with a degree of sarcasm. A little boy, who could never draw from him any other answer, said, "That is impossible. You have too good a heart to hate us. Should not your Lordship substitute your fear for your hatred?"

It would be right to speak here of English

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literature, and the men of letters, but they demand a separate article. I will, therefore, content myself, for the present, with recording some critical decisions, which have much astonished me, because they are in direct contradiction to our received opinions.

Richardson is little read, being accused of insupportable tediousness and lowness of style. It is said of Hume and Gibbon that they have lost the genius of the English language, and filled their writings with a crowd of Gallicisms; the former is also accused of being dull and immoral. Pope merely passes for an exact and elegant versifier; Johnson contends that his Essay on Man is only a collection of common passages rendered into pleasant metre. Dryden and Milton are the two authors, to whom the title of author is exclusively applied. The Spectator is almost forgotten, and Locke is seldom mentioned, being thought a feeble visionary. None but professed philosophers read Bacon. Shakspeare alone preserves his imperial influence, which is easily accounted for by the following fact.

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I was one night at Covent-Garden Theatre, which takes its name, as is generally known, from an ancient convent, on the scite of which it is built. A well dressed man, seated himself near me, and asked soon afterwards *where he was.* I looked at him with astonishment, and answered, "In Covent Garden." "A pretty garden indeed!" exclaimed he, bursting into a fit of laughter, and presenting to me a bottle of rum. It was a sailor, who had accidentally passed this way as he came from the city, just at the time the performance was commencing; and having observed the pressure of the crowd at the entrance of the theatre, had paid his money, and entered the house without knowing what he was to see.

How should the English have a theatre to be termed supportable, when the pit is composed of judges recently arrived from Bengal, and the coast of Guinea, who do not even know where they are? Shakspeare may reign eternally in such a nation. It is thought that every thing is justified by saying that the follies of English tragedy are faithful pictures of nature. If this

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were true, the most natural situations are not those, which produce the greatest effect. It is natural to fear death, and yet a victim, who laments its approach, dries the tears before excited by commiseration. The human heart wishes for more than it is capable of sustaining, and above all, wishes for objects of admiration. There is implanted in it an impulse towards some indescribable unknown beauty, for which it was perhaps created at its origin.

A graver observation arises also from this subject. A nation, which has always been nearly barbarous with respect to the arts, may continue to admire barbarous productions, without its being of any consequence; but I do not know to what point a nation, possessing *chef d'œuvres* in every pursuit, can resume its love of the monstrous, without detracting from its character. For this reason, the inclination to admire Shakspeare is more dangerous in France than England. In the latter country this results from ignorance —in ours it would be the effect of depravity. In an enlightened age, the manners of a truly polished people contribute more towards good

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taste than is generally imagined. Bad taste, therefore, which has so many means of regaining its influence, must depend on false ideas, or a natural bias. The mind incessantly works on the heart, and it is difficult for the road, taken by the heart, to be straight, when that of the imagination is crooked. He, who likes deformity, is not far from liking vice, and he, who is insensible to beauty, may easily form a false conception of virtue. Bad taste and vice almost always move together; for the former is only the expression of the latter, in the same way as words convey our ideas to others.

I will close this article with some brief observations on the soil, the atmosphere, and public buildings of England.

The country is almost without birds, and the rivers are small, but the banks of these have, nevertheless, a pleasing effect from the solitude which prevails there. The verdure of the fields is of a most lively description. There are few, indeed hardly any woods; but every person's small property being enclosed by a hedge, you might fancy when you take a survey from the

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top of a hill, that you were in the middle of a forest. England, at the first glance, resembles Britany, the heaths and plains being surrounded with trees. As to the sky of this country, its azure is brighter than our's, but less transparent. The variations of light are more striking from the multitude of clouds. In summer, when the sun sets at London, beyond Kensington Gardens, it sometimes affords a very picturesque spectacle. The immense volume of coal smoke, hanging over the city, represents those black rocks, tinged with purple, which are adopted in our representations of Tartarus, while the ancient towers of Westminster Abbey, crowned with vapour, and reddened with the last rays of the sun, raise their heads above the city, the palace, and St. James's Park, like a great monument of death, appearing to command all the other handyworks of man.

Saint Paul's church is the most beautiful modern, and Westminster Abbey the most beautiful Gothic edifice in England. I shall, perhaps, speak more at large respecting the latter on some future occasion. I have often, when

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returning from my excursions round London, passed behind Whitehall, through the court in which Charles the First was beheaded. It is in an abandoned state, and the grass grows among the stones. I have sometimes stopped and listened to the wind, moaning round the statue of Charles the Second, which points to the spot where his father perished. I never found any person in this place but workmen cutting stone, whistling as they pursued their labours. Having asked one day what this statue meant, some of them could hardly give me any answer, and others were entirely ignorant of the subject. Nothing ever afforded a more just idea of human events, and our littleness. What is become of persons who made so much noise? Time has taken a stride, and the face of the earth has been renewed. To generations, then divided by political animosity, have succeeded generations indifferent to the past, but filling the present times with new animosities, which succeeding generations will in their turn forget.

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ENGLISH LITERATURE.

I.—YOUNG.

When a writer has formed a new school, and is found, after the criticisms of half a century, to be still possessed of great reputation, it is important to the cause of literature that the reason of this success should be investigated; especially when it is neither ascribable to greatness of genius, nor to superiority of taste, nor to the perfection of the art.

A few tragic situations and a few quaint words, with an indescribable, vague, and fantastic use of woods, heaths, winds, spectres, and tempests, account for the celebrity of Shakspeare.

Young, who has nothing of this nature in his works, is indebted, perhaps, for a great portion of his reputation, to the fine picture which he displays at the opening of his chief work, "The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death,

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and Immortality." A minister of the Almighty, an aged father, who has lost his only daughter, wakes in the middle of succeeding nights to moan among the tombs. He associates death with time and eternity, through the only grand medium which man has within himself—I mean sorrow. Such a picture strikes the observer at once, and the effect is durable.

But on advancing a little into these Night Thoughts, when the imagination, roused by the exordium of the poet, has created a world of tears and reveries, you will find no trace of what the author promised at the outset. You behold a man, who torments himself in every way for the purpose of producing tender and melancholy ideas, without arriving at any thing beyond morose philosophy. Young was pursued by the phantom of the world even to the recesses of the dead, and all his declamation upon mortality exhibits a feeling of mortified ambition. There is nothing natural in his sensibility, nothing ideal in his grief. The lyre is always touched with a heavy hand. Young has particularly endeavoured to impart a character of sadness

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to his meditations. Now, this character is derived from three sources—the scenes of nature, the ideas floating upon the memory, and religious principle.

With regard to the scenes of nature, Young wished to avail himself of them as auxiliaries to his complaints, but I do not know that he has succeeded. He apostrophizes the moon, and he talks to the stars, but the reader is not thereby affected. I cannot explain in what the melancholy consists, which a poet draws from a contemplation of nature; but it is certain that he finds it at every step. He combines his soul with the roaring of the wind, which imparts to him ideas of solitude. A receding wave reminds him of life—a falling leaf of man. This sadness is hid in every desert for the use of poets. It is the *Echo* of the fable who was consumed by grief, and the invisible inhabitant of the mountains.

When the mind is labouring under chagrin, the reflection should always take the form of sentiment and imagery, but in Young the sentiment, on the contrary, is transformed into

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reflection and argument. On opening the first Complaint I read;

"From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose
I wake: how happy they, who wake no more!
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding thought,
From wave to wave of fancied misery,
At random drove, her helm of reason lost.
Though now restored, 'tis only change of pain,
(A bitter change) severer for severe.
The day too short for my distress, and night,
Even in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate."

Is this the language of sorrow? What is a wrecked desponding thought, floating from wave to wave of fancied misery? What is a *night* which is a *sun*, compared with the colour of a person's fate? The only remarkable feature of this quotation is the idea that the slumber of the tomb may be disturbed by dreams; but this directly brings to mind the expression of Hamlet: "To sleep—to dream!"

Ossian awakes also at midnight to weep, but Ossian weeps in reality. "Lead, son of Alpin, lead the aged to his woods. The winds

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begin to rise. The dark wave of the lake resounds. Bends there not a tree from Mora with its branches bare? It bends, son of Alpin, in the rustling blast. My harp hangs on a blasted branch. The sound of its strings is mournful. Does the wind touch thee, oh harp, or is it some passing ghost? It is the hand of Malvina. But bring me the harp, son of Alpin, another song shall arise. My soul shall depart in the sound; my fathers shall hear it in their airy hall. Their dim faces shall hang with joy from their cloud, and their hands receive their son."

Here we have mournful images, and poetical reverie. The English allow that the prose of Ossian is as poetic as verse, and possesses all the inflexions of the latter; and hence a French translation of this, though a literal one, will be, if good, always supportable; for that, which is simple and natural in *one* language, possesses these qualities in *every* language.

It is generally thought that melancholy allusions, taken from the winds, the moon, and the clouds, were unknown to the ancients;

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but there are some instances of them in Homer, and a beautiful one in Virgil. Eneas perceives the shade of Dido in the recesses of a forest, *as one sees, or fancies that one sees the new moon rising amidst clouds.*

" Qualem primo qui surgere mense
Aut videt, aut videsse putat per nubila lunam."

Observe all the circumstances. It is the moon, which the spectator sees, or fancies that he sees crossing the clouds; consequently the shade of Dido is reduced to a very small compass, but this moon is in its first phasis, and what is this planet at such a time? Does not the shade of Dido itself seem to vanish from the " mind's eye?" Ossian is here traced to Virgil; but it is Ossian at Naples, where the light is purer, and the vapours more transparent.

Young was therefore ignorant of, or rather has ill expressed melancholy, which feeds itself on the contemplation of nature, and which, whether soft or majestic, follows the natural course of feeling. How superior is Milton to the author of the Night Thoughts in the nobi-

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lity of grief! Nothing is finer than his four last lines of Paradise Lost:

> "The world was all before them where to chuse
> Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
> They hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way."

In this passage the reader sees all the solitudes of the world opened to our first father, all those seas which water unknown lands, all the forests of the habitable globe, and man left alone with his sins amidst the deserts of creation.

Harvey, though possessing a less elevated genius than the author of the Night Thoughts, has evinced a softer and more generous sensibility in his "Meditations among the Tombs." He says of an infant, which suddenly died: "What did the little hasty sojourner find so forbidding and disgustful in our upper world, to occasion its precipitate exit? It is written, indeed, of its suffering Saviour that, when he had tasted the vinegar, mingled with gall, he would not drink *. And did our new-come stranger begin

* Matthew, chapter 27, verse 34.

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to sip the cup of life; but, perceiving the bitterness, turn away its head, and refuse the draught? Was this the cause why the weary babe only opened its eyes, just looked on the light, and then withdrew into the more inviting regions of undisturbed repose?"

Dr. Beattie, a Scotch poet, has introduced the most lovely reverie into his Minstrel. It is when he describes the first effects of the Muse upon a young mountain bard, who as yet does not comprehend the genius, by which he is tormented. At one time the future poet goes and seats himself on the borders of the sea during a tempest; at another, he quits the sports of the village that he may listen, first at a distance, and then more closely to the sound of the bagpipe. Young was, perhaps, appointed by Nature to treat of higher subjects, but still he was not a complete poet. Milton, who sung the misfortunes of primeval man, sighed also in *Il Penseroso*.

Those good writers of the French nation, who have known the charms of reverie, have prodigiously surpassed Young. Chaulieu, like Horace, has mingled thoughts of death with

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the illusions of life. The following well known lines are of a melancholy cast much more to be admired than the exaggerations of the English poet.

"Grotto, where the murm'ring stream
Mossy bank and flow'ret laves,
Be of thee my future dream,
And of yonder limpid waves.

Fontenay, delicious spot,
Which my youthful life recals,
Oh, when death shall be my lot,
May I rest within thy walls!

Muses, who dispell'd my woe,
While the humble swain you bless'd,
Lovely trees, that saw me grow,
Soon you'll see me sink to rest."

In like manner the inimitable La Fontaine indulges himself.

"Why should my verse describe a flow'ry bank?
Longer the cruel Fates refuse to spin
My golden thread of life. I shall not sleep
Beneath a canopy of sculptur'd pomp;
But will my rest for this be more disturb'd,
Or will my slumbers less delight impart?
No, in the trackless desert let me lie," &c.

It was a great poet, from whom such ideas

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émanated; but to pursue the comparison, there is not a page of Young, which can afford a passage equal to the following one of J. J. Rousseau. "When evening approached, I descended from the higher parts of the island, and seated myself at the side of the lake in some retired part of the strand. There the noise of the waves and the agitation of the water fixed my attention, and driving every other agitation from my soul, plunged it into a delicious reverie, in which night often imperceptibly surprised me. The flux and reflux of the waves, with their continued noise, but swelling in a louder degree at intervals, unceasingly struck my eyes and ears, while they added to my internal emotions, and caused me to feel the pleasure of existence without taking the pains to think. From time to time a weak and short reflection on the instability of human affairs, occurred to me, which was supplied by the surface of the waters; but these slight impressions were soon effaced by the uniformity of the continued motion which rocked my mind to repose; and which, without any active concurrence of my soul, attached me

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so strongly to the spot, that when summoned away by the hour and a signal agreed upon, I could not tear myself from the scene without a disagreeable effort."

This passage of Rousseau reminds me that one night, when I was lying in a cottage, during my American travels, I heard an extraordinary sort of murmur from a neighbouring lake. Conceiving this noise to be the forerunner of a storm, I went out of the hut to survey the heavens. Never did I see a more beautiful night, or one in which the atmosphere was purer. The lake's expanse was tranquil, and reflected the light of the moon, which shone on the projecting points of the mountains, and on the forests of the desert. An Indian canoe was traversing the waves in silence. The noise, which I had heard, proceeded from the flood tide of the lake, which was beginning, and which sounded like a sort of groaning as it rose among the rocks. I had left the hut with an idea of a tempest—let any one judge of the impression which this calm and serene picture must have made upon me—it was like enchantment.

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Young has but ill availed himself, as I conceive, of the reveries, which result from such scenes; and this arose from his being eminently defective in tenderness. For the same reason he has failed in that secondary sort of sadness, which arises from the sorrows of memory. Never does the poet of the tombs revert with sensibility to the first stage of life, when all is innocence and happiness. He is ignorant of the delights afforded by the recollection of family incidents and the paternal roof. He knows nothing of the regret, with which a person looks back at the sports and pastimes of childhood. He never exclaims, like the poet of the Seasons:

> "Welcome, kindred glooms!
> Congenial horrors, hail! With frequent foot,
> Pleas'd have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
> When nurs'd by careless solitude I liv'd,
> And sung of nature with unceasing joy,
> Pleas'd have I wander'd through your rough domain,
> Trod the pure virgin snows, myself as pure." &c.

Gray in his Ode on a distant view of Eton College has introduced the same tenderness of recollection.

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" Ah happy hills, ah pleasing shade,
Ah fields belov'd in vain,
Where once my careless childhood stray'd
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from you blow,
.....
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring."

As to the recollections of misfortune, they are numerous in the works of Young. But why do they appear to be deficient in truth, like all the rest? Why is the reader unable to feel an interest in the tears of the poet? Gilbert, expiring in a hospital, and in the flower of his age, finds his way to every heart, especially when he speaks of the friends who have forsaken him.

" At life's convivial board I sat,
And revell'd in its choicest cheer,
But now I'm call'd away by Fate,
I die—and none will shed a tear.

Farewell, ye streams and verdant glades,
And thou, bright sun, with smile so warm,
Farewell, ye placid forest-shades,
Farewell to nature's ev'ry charm!

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Oh may you long confer delight
On friends I fondly deem'd so true,
Who leave me now abandon'd quite,
Without one final sad adieu !"

Look in Virgil at the Trojan women, seated on the sea shore, and weeping while they survey the immensity of the ocean.

" Cunctæque profundum
Pontum aspectabant flentes."

What beautiful harmony ! How forcibly does it depict the vast solitude of the ocean, and the remembrance of their lost country ! What genuine sorrow is conveyed by this one weeping glance over the surface of the billows !

M. du Parny has combined the tender charms of memory with another species of sentiment. His complaint at the tomb of Emma is full of that soft melancholy, which characterizes the writings of the only elegiac poet of France.

" Friendship, with fugitive deception kind,
Chases thy image, Emma, from my mind;
Emma, the charming object of my love,
So lately call'd to blissful realms above.
Sweet girl, how momentary was thy sway !
All from thy tomb now turn their eyes away;
Thy memory, like thyself, is sinking to decay."

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The Muse of the poet, to whom we are indebted for Eleonora, indulged in reverie upon the same rocks, where Paul, resting his head upon his hand, saw the vessel sail away, which contained Virginia. The cloistered Eloïsa revived all her sorrows and all her love by even thinking of Abelard. Recollections are the echo of the passions; and the sounds, which this echo repeats, acquire, from distance, a vague and melancholy character, which makes them more seductive than the accents of the passions themselves.

It remains for me to speak of religious sadness. Except Gray and Hervey, I know only one protestant writer (M. Necker) who infused a degree of tenderness into sentiments drawn from religion. It is known that Pope was a catholic, and that Dryden was the same at intervals. It is believed too that Shakspeare belonged to the Roman church. A father burying his daughter by stealth in a foreign land—what a beautiful subject for a christian minister! Notwithstanding this, but few affecting passages are to be found in Young's Complaint called Narcissa.

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He sheds fewer tears over the tomb of his only daughter than Bossuet over the coffin of Madame Henriette.

"Sweet harmonist, and beautiful as sweet!
And young as beautiful, and soft as young!
And gay as soft, and innocent as gay!
And happy (if aught happy here) as good!
For Fortune fond had built her nest on high.
Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume
Transfix'd by Fate (who loves a lofty mark)
How from the summit of the grove she fell,
And left it unharmonious! All its charms
Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song!
Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,
Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain,
Oh to forget her!) trilling thro' my heart."

This passage, all prejudice apart, I think intolerable, though it is one of the most beautiful in the French translation of Young's Night Thoughts by M. Le Tourneur. Is this the language of a father? Sweet harmonist or musician, as beautiful as sweet, and young as beautiful, and soft as young, and gay as soft, and innocent as gay! Is it thus that the mother of Euryalus deplores the loss of her son, or that

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Priam utters lamentations over the body of Hector? M. de Tourneur has displayed much taste by converting Young's "*birds*, transfixed by Fate, *who loves a lofty mark*," into a nightingale struck by the fowler's shot. It is a prodigious improvement, as may be instantly perceived. The means should always be proportioned to the object, and we ought not to use a lever for the purpose of raising a straw. Fate may dispose of an empire; change a world, elevate or throw down a great man, but Fate should not be employed in killing a bird. It is the *durus arator*, it is the *feathered arrow* which should be used to kill nightingales and pigeons.

It is not in this way that Bossuet speaks of Madame Henriette. "She has passed," says he, "from morning to evening like the herbs of the field. In the morning she flourished—oh, with what elegance! You know it. At night we saw her withered, and those strong expressions, by which the Scriptures almost exaggerate the instability of human affairs, were precisely and literally verified in this Princess. Alas, we composed her memoirs of all that we could fancy

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most glorious. The past and the present were our guarantees for the future. Such was the history, of which we had formed the outline, and to complete our noble project, nothing was requisite but the duration of her life, which we did not think in any danger. For who could have supposed that years would be refused to one of such vivacity in her youth? By her death our plan is totally destroyed in a moment. Behold her—in spite of her great heart, behold this Princess lately so much admired and beloved! See to what a state death has reduced her; and even these remains, such as they are, will soon disappear."

I should have liked to quote some pages of regularly supported beauty from the Night Thoughts of Young. Such are to be found in the French translation, but not in the original. The Nights of M. Le Tourneur, and the imitation of M. Colerdeau are works in all respects different to the English one. The latter only possesses beauties scattered here and there, and rarely supplies ten irreproachable lines together. Seneca and Lucan may be sometimes traced in

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Young, but Job and Pascal never. He is not a man of sorrow—he does not please the truly unhappy.

Young declaims in several places against solitude; so that the habit of his soul was certainly not an inclination to reverie.* The saints pursued their meditations in the deserts, and the Parnassus of poets is also a solitary mountain. Bourdaloue intreated of the superior of his order permission to retire from the world. "I feel," wrote he, "that my frame grows feeble, and approaches towards dissolution. I have run my course, and thank Heaven, I can add that I have been faithful to my God.—Let me be allowed to employ the remainder of my

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* The English reader will probably not have agreed with M. de Chateaubriand on several points discussed in this criticism. Young can never be said to have disliked solitude. Let him speak for himself:

"Oh lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul,
Who think it solitude to be alone!
Communion sweet, communion large and high!" &c.

Editor.

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days in devotion to the Almighty, and in securing my own salvation. In retirement I shall forget the affairs of this world, and humble myself with contrition every day before my Maker." If Bossuet, living amidst the magnificence of Versailles was able to diffuse a genuine and majestic species of sadness through his writings, it was because he found solitude in religion; because though his body was in the world, his soul was in a desert; because his heart had found a sanctuary in the secret recesses of the tabernacle, because, as he himself said of Maria Theresa of Austria, he ran to the altar to enjoy humble repose with David; because he shut himself, as that Princess did, in his oratory, where, in spite of the tumult of the court, he found the carmel of Elias, the desert of Saint John, and the mountain, which so often witnessed the sorrows of Jesus."

Dr. Johnson, after having severely criticized Young's Night Thoughts, finishes by comparing them to a Chinese garden. For my own part, all I have wished to say is, that if we impartially compare the literary works of other nations with

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those of France, we shall find an immense superiority in favour of our own country. We always at least equal others in strength of thought, while we are certainly superior in point of taste; and it should ever be remembered that though genius produces the literary offspring, taste preserves it. Taste is the good sense of genius, and without it the latter is only a silly species of sublimity. But it a singular circumstance that this sure criterion, by which every thing yields the exact tone it ought to yield, is still less frequently found than the creative faculty. Genius and wit are disseminated in about equal proportions, at all times; but there are only certain nations, and among these only particular moments, at which taste appears in all its purity. Before and after this moment, every thing fails either from deficiency or excess. It is for this reason that perfect works are so rare; for it is necessary that they should be produced in the happy hours of united taste and genius. This great junction, like that of certain heavenly bodies, appears only to take place after the lapse of several ages, and then endures only for a moment.

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II.—SHAKSPEARE.

After having spoken of Young, I proceed to a man who has made a schism in literature, who is idolized by the country which gave him birth, admired throughout the North of Europe, and placed by some Frenchmen at the side of Corneille and Racine.

It was Voltaire, who made France acquainted with Shakspeare. The opinion, which he at first formed of English tragedy, was, like most of his early opinions, replete with justice, taste, and impartiality. In a letter to Lord Bolingbroke, written about the year 1730, he observed: "With what pleasure did I see, while in London, the tragedy of Julius Cæsar, which has been the delight of your nation for a century and a half!" On another occasion he said: "Shakespeare created the English stage. He had a genius abounding with vigorous conception; he was natural and sublime, but he did not possess a single spark of taste, or the least knowledge of rules. I shall make a bold assertion, but a true one, when I state that this

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author spoiled the English stage. There are such beautiful scenes, such grand and terrible passages in his monstrous farces, which are called tragedies, that his pieces have always been performed with great success."

Such were the first decisions of Voltaire as to Shakspeare; but when an attempt was made to set up this great genius as a model of perfection, when the masterpieces of the Greek and French drama were declared inferior to his writings, then the author of Merope perceived the danger. He perceived that by elevating the beauties of a barbarian, he had misled those, who were unable, like himself, to separate the pure metal from the dross. He wished to retrace his steps, and attacked the idol he had worshipped; but it was then too late, and he in vain repented that he had *opened the gate to mediocrity*, and *assisted*, as he himself said, *in placing the monster on the altar*. Voltaire had made England, which was then but little known, a sort of marvellous country to supply him with such heroes, opinions, and ideas as he wanted. Towards the close of his life he reproached

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himself with this false admiration, of which he had only availed himself to support his doctrines. He began to discover its lamentable consequences, and might unfortunately exclaim: "*Et quorum pars magna fui.*"

M. de la Harpe, an excellent critic, in his analysis of Shakspeare's Tempest, which was translated into French by M. Le Tourneur, exposed to full view the gross irregularities of Shakspeare, and avenged the cause of the French stage. Two modern authors, Madame de Staël Holstein and M. de Rivarol have also passed sentence on the great English tragic poet; but it appears to me that notwithstanding so much has been written on this subject, several interesting remarks may yet be made.

As to the English critics, they have seldom spoken the truth respecting their favourite poet. Ben Jonson, who was first the disciple, and then the rival of Shakspeare, shared with him at first their good opinion. Pope observes that "they endeavoured to exalt the one at the expense of the other." Because Ben Jonson had much the more learning it was said, on the one hand,

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that Shakspeare had none at all; and because Shakspeare had much the most wit and fancy, it was retorted on the other that Jonson wanted both. Ben Jonson is only known at the present day by his Fox and his Alchymist.*

Pope displayed more impartiality in his criticisms. "Of all English poets," says he, "Shakspeare must be confessed to be the fairest and fullest subject for criticism, and to afford the most numerous, as well as most conspicuous instances, both of beauties and faults of all sorts."

If Pope had abided by this judgment, he would have deserved praise for his moderation; but soon afterwards he is hurried away by the prejudices of his country, and extols Shakspeare above every genius ancient and modern. He

* Surely at present better known by Every Man in his Humour than any of the pieces mentioned by the author. The Fox is never performed, and the Alchymist, which Garrick reduced to a farce, under the title of the Tobacconist, for the purpose of displaying his own inimitable powers in the character of Abel Drugger, has been also laid on the shelf, none of our modern performers having attempted that part except Mr. Emery. The great actor of the present day, however, Mr. Kean is about to appear in the character.—EDITOR.

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goes so far as even to excuse the lowness of some characters in the English poet by this ingenious comparison. "In these cases," says he, "Shakspeare's genius is like some prince of a romance in the disguise of a shepherd or peasant; a certain greatness of spirit now and then breaks out, which manifest his higher extraction and qualities."*

* M. de Chateaubriand has here been guilty of a great oversight, for I will not suppose that he has wilfully perverted Pope's meaning to support his own philippic against our immortal bard. He seems to think that the above quotation was made upon *tragedy*, whereas it was made upon *comedy*, and every one must be aware that strictures upon the one are very unlikely to be just as to the other. That the reader may judge for himself I will quote the whole passage from Pope. "In *tragedy*," says he, "nothing was so sure to surprise and cause admiration, as the most strange, unexpected, and consequently most unnatural events and incidents; the most exaggerated thoughts; the most verbose and bombast expressions; the most pompous rhimes, and thundering versifications. In *comedy*, nothing was so sure to please as mean buffoonery, vile ribaldry, and unmannerly jests of fools and clowns. Yet even in these our author's wit buoys up, and is borne above his subject; his genius in those low parts is like some prince of a romance in the dis-

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Theobald and Sir Thomas Hanmer follow in their turn. Their admiration is without bounds. They attack Pope for having made some trifling corrections in the works of the great poet. The celebrated Dr. Warburton, who undertook the defence of his friend, informs us that Mr. Theobald was a poor man, and Sir Thomas Hanmer a poor critic; that he gave money to the former, and notes to the latter. Even the good sense and discrimination of Dr. Johnson seems to forsake him when he speaks of Shakspeare. He reproaches Rymer and Voltaire for having said that the English tragic poet does not sufficiently preserve a verisimilitude of manners—that Shakspeare's Romans are not sufficiently Roman, and his kings not completely royal. "These," says he, "are the petty cavils

guise of a shepherd or peasant; a certain greatness and spirit now and then break out, which manifest his higher extraction and qualities." Surely Pope distinctly alludes, in these last lines, to *comedy*. As an excuse for the introduction of low parts among those of a graver cast, he merely says that Shakspeare "writ to the people," that "the audience was generally composed of the meaner sort," and that he was obliged to hit the taste and humour of the times, in order to gain a subsistence.—EDITOR.

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of petty minds. A poet overlooks the casual distinctions of country and condition, as a painter, satisfied with the figure, neglects the drapery." It is useless to descant upon the bad taste and falsity of this criticism. The verisimilitude of manners, far from being the drapery, is the leading feature of the picture itself. All those critics, who incessantly dwell on nature, regarding the "casual distinction of country and condition" as prejudices of the art, are like those politicians who plunge states into barbarity, by wishing to annihilate social distinctions.

I will not enter into the opinions of Rowe, Steevens, Gildon, Dennis, Peck, Garrick, &c. Mrs. Montague has surpassed them all in point of enthusiasm. Hume and Blair are the only persons, who keep within tolerable bounds. Sherlock has dared to say (and it required courage even for an Englishman to go so far) that there is nothing in Shakspeare, which can be called mediocrity; that all he has written is either excellent or detestable; that he never followed nor even conceived a plan, excepting, perhaps, that of the Merry Wives of Windsor; but that

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he often writes a scene very well. This critique very nearly approaches the truth.

Mr. Mason, in his Elfrida and Caractacus, has tried, but without success, to transplant the tragedy of Greece into England. The Cato of Addison is now hardly ever played. At the Theatres of Great Britain the audience is only diverted by the monstrosities of Shakspeare, or the horrors of Otway.

Were we contented to speak vaguely of Shakspeare, without deliberately weighing the question, and without reducing criticism to some particular points, we should never arrive at any proper explanation; for by thus confounding *the age in which he wrote* with *the genius of the individual,* and *the dramatic art* itself, every one might praise or censure the father of the English Theatre according to his inclinations. It appears to us that Shakspeare should be considered with reference to all the three points, which I have just stated.

First, then as to *the age in which he lived,* Shakspeare cannot be very much admired. He was perhaps superior to his cotemporary Lope

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de Vega, but he can, by no means, be compared with Garnier and Hardy, who at that time "lisped in numbers" among us, and uttered the first accents of the French Melpomene. It has been ascertained too that the prelate Trissino had, at the same period caused regular tragedy to re-appear in Italy by the production of his Sophonisba. Curious researches have been made for the translations of ancient authors, which existed in Shakspeare's time. I do not find in the catalogue any other dramatic pieces than one called Jocasta, taken from the Phœnicians of Euripides, the Andria and Eunuch of Terence, the Menechmi of Plautus and the tragedies of Seneca. It is doubtful whether Shakspeare had any knowledge of these versions, for he has not borrowed the foundation of his plays from these original authors, even when they were translated into English, but has worked upon some English imitations of the ancient sources. For instance, with regard to Romeo and Juliet, he has neither taken the story from Girolamo de la Corte, nor the novel of Bandello, but from a small English poem called the Tragical History

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of Romeo and Juliet. In like manner, he does not owe the story of Hamlet to Saxo Grammaticus, because he did not understand Latin.* It is known that, generally speaking, Shakspeare was an uneducated illiterate man. He was obliged to abscond from the county in which he resided, for having killed deer in a gentleman's park, and before he became an actor in London, took care of horses at the door of the theatre, while the owners of them attended the representation. It is a memorable circumstance that Shakspeare and Molière were performers; both these men though so highly endowed with mental qualifications, were forced to tread the boards for the purpose of obtaining a livelihood. The one regained the dramatic art lost in the lapse of ages; the other brought it to perfection. Like two philosophers of antiquity they shared the empire of smiles and tears; and both, perhaps,

* See Saxo Grammaticus from page 48 to 59, Amlethus ne prudentius agendo patruo suspectus redderetur; stoliditatis simulationem amplexus, extremum mentis vitium finxit.

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consoled themselves for the injustice of fortune, the one in painting the follies, and the other the sorrows of mankind.

As to the second point, *his genius, or natural talents,* Shakspeare is not less prodigious that Molière. I do not know, indeed, that any man ever examined human nature with deeper penetration. Whether he treats of the passions, whether he speaks of morals or policy, whether he deplores or foresees the misfortunes of states he has a thousand sentiments to cite, a thousand thoughts to introduce, a thousand applications to make with regard to all the circumstances of life. It is with reference to genius that the fine isolated scenes of Shakspeare should be considered, and not merely as to their dramatic correctness. In this consists the principal error of the poets' admirers in England: for if these scenes be considered according to the rules of art, it would be necessary to ascertain whether they are necessary, and whether they are properly connected with the subject. The "*non erat his locus*" occurs to the reader in every page of Shakspeare.

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Reverting, however, to the works of the great author himself, how beautiful is his third scene of the fourth act of Macbeth!

Enter Rosse.

Macduff. See, who comes here?

Malcolm. My countryman, but yet I know him not.

Macduff. My ever welcome cousin, welcome hither!

Malcolm. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that make us strangers.

Rosse. Sir, amen!

Macduff. Stands Scotland where it did?

Rosse. Alas, poor country,
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile
Where sighs and groans, and shrieks that rend the air
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstacy. The dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

Macduff. Oh relation
Too nice, and yet too true!

Malcolm. What is the newest grief?

.....

Rosse. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,

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Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.

.....

Your castle is surpris'd, your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd. To relate the manner
Were on the quarry of these murder'd deer
To add the death of you.

Malcolm. Merciful heaven!

.....

Macduff. My children too!

Rosse. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

Macduff. And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?

Rosse. I have said.

Malcolm. Be comforted.

Macduff. He has no children.—All my pretty ones?
Did you say all?—O hell-kite, all!
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?"

What truth and energy in the description of Scotland's misfortunes! The smile, which is described to be only upon the countenance of infants, the cries of anguish which no one dares to observe, the deaths so frequent that no one inquires for whom the passing bell is tolling—

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does not each Frenchman fancy that he sees the picture of his native land during the sway of Robespierre? Xenophon has given almost a similar description of Athens during the reign of the thirty tyrants. "Athens," observes he, "was only one vast tomb, inhabited by terror and silence. A look, a motion, a thought became fatal to the unfortunate citizens. The countenance of the victim was studied, and the wretches sought there for candour and virtue, as the judge endeavours to discover the marks of guilt in the countenance of a culprit *."

The dialogue of Rosse and Macduff calls to mind that of Flavius and Curiatius in Corneille, when the former announces to the lover of Camilla that he has been fixed upon to fight the Horatii.

Curiatius. Has Alba of three warriors made her choice?
Flavius. She has, and I announce it.
Curiatius. Who the three?
Flavius. Your brothers and yourself.
Curiatius. Who?
Flavius. I have said.
You and your brothers.

* Xenoph. Hist. Græc. Lib. 2.

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The interrogations of Macduff and Curiatius are beauties of the same order. "My children too?"—"Wife, children."—"My wife killed too?"—"I have said . . ."—"Who the three?"—"Your brothers and yourself."—"Who?"—"You and your brothers." But Shakspeare's expression:—"*He has no children,*" remains without a parallel.

The same artist, who painted this picture, wrote the charming farewell scene in Romeo and Juliet. Romeo, who is condemned to exile, is surprised by the morning while with Juliet, to whom he is secretly married.

Juliet. Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day;
It was the nightingale, and not the lark
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings in yon pomegranate tree.
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Romeo. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale. Look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east;
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone and live—or stay and die,

Juliet. Yon light is not day light—I know it, I:
It is some meteor that the sun exhales.

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To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet; thou needst not to be gone.

Romeo. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death,
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heav'n so high above our heads:
I have more care to stay than will to go,
Come, death, and welcome—Juliet wills it so.
How is't, my soul?—Let's talk—it is not day.

Juliet. It is, it is. Hie hence—begone—away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords, and unpleasing sharps.
Oh now be gone—More light and light it grows."

How affecting is this contrast of the charms of morning and the last pleasures of a newly married couple, with the horrible catastrophe which is about to follow! It is of a nature still more innocent than the Grecians can boast, and less pastoral than Aminias or Pastor Fido. I know only one parting scene, which can bear a comparison with Romeo and Juliet. It is to be found in an Indian drama, translated from the Sanscrit language; and even this arises

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from the novelty of the image, not at all from the interest of the situation. Sacontala, when on the point of quitting the paternal roof, finds herself stopped:

"*Sacontala.* Ah! what is it that clings to the skirts of my robe, and detains me?

Canna. It is thy adopted child, the little fawn, whose mouth, when the sharp points of Cusa grass had wounded it, has been so often smeared by thy hand with the healing oil of Ingudi; who has been so often fed by thee with a handful of Syámáka grains, and now will not leave the footsteps of his protectress.

Sac. Why dost thou weep, tender fawn, for me, who must leave our common dwelling place?—As thou wast reared by me when thou hadst lost thy mother, who died soon after thy birth, so will my foster-father attend thee, when we are separated, with anxious care. Return, poor thing, return—we must part. [*She bursts into tears.*

Can. Thy tears, my child, ill suit the occasion. We shall all meet again; be firm. See the direct road before thee, and follow it.—When the big tear lurks beneath thy beautiful eye-lashes, let thy resolution check its first efforts to disengage itself.—In thy passage over this earth, where the paths are now high, now low, and the true path seldom distinguished, the traces of thy feet must needs be unequal; but virtue will press thee right onward."

Published Translation of Sacantala.

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The parting scene of Romeo and Juliet is not pointed out by Bandello, and belongs entirely to Shakspeare. The fifty-two commentators on this author, instead of acquainting us with a number of useless things, should have employed themselves in discovering the beauties which appertain to this extraordinary man as his own property, and those which he has borrowed from others. Bandello thus records the parting of the lovers in few words:

"A la fine, cominciando l'aurora a voler uscire, si basciarono, estrettamente abbraciarono gli amanti, e piena di lagrime e sospiri si dissero adio." *

"At last, morning beginning to break, the two lovers kissed and closely embraced each other, then full of tears and sighs bade farewell."

It may be remarked that Shakspeare generally makes great use of contrasts. He likes to exhibit gaiety at the side of sadness, to mix diversion and the shout of joy with funeral pomp and the voice of sorrow. The musicians, summoned to the marriage of Juliet, arrive precisely in time to follow her to the grave. Indifferent

* Novelle del Bandello, Seconda Parte.

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as to the afflictions of the house, they proceed to indecent pleasantries, and discuss matters totally irrelevant to the fatal event. Who does not in this recognize a true delineation of life? Who does not feel the bitterness of the picture? Who has not witnessed similar scenes? These effects were by no means unknown to the Greeks, and several traces of them are to be found in Euripides; but Shakspeare works them up to the highest pitch of tragedy. Phædra has just expired, and the persons forming the chorus do not know whether they ought to enter the apartment of the princess.

FIRST DEMI-CHORUS

Φιλαι, τι δρωμεν η δοκει περαν δομοις,
Ανσαι τ'ανασσ'αν δε επιπο αστων βροχων.

SECOND DEMI-CHORUS.

Τιδ'ε παρεισι προπο ολοι νεανιαι,
Το πολλα πραστειν εκ ενασφαλει βιω.

"*First Demi-Chorus.* Companions, what shall we do? Ought we to enter into the palace, and assist in disengaging the queen from her narrow confines?

Second Demi-Chorus. That care belongs to her slaves. Why are they not present? Those, who meddle with too many affairs, have no safety in life."

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In Alcestes, Death and Appollo are jokers. Death wishes to seize Alcestes, while yet young, because he does not like an old victim, or as Father Brumoy translates it, a wrinkled victim. These contrasts should not be entirely rejected, for they sometimes produce an effect bordering on the terrible, though a single shade of expression, whether too strong or too weak, is sufficient to make them immediately low or ridiculous.

Shakspeare, like all tragic poets, has sometimes succeeded in displaying genuine comedy, whereas comic poets have never achieved the point of writing good tragedy; a circumstance which perhaps proves that there is something of a vaster nature in the genius of Melpomene than in that of Thalia. Whoever paints with skill the mournful side of human nature, is also able to represent the ridiculous one; for he who attains the greater object can command the less.* But the mind, which

* This I conceive to be what the lawyers term a *non sequitur*. It cannot be said that all tragic poets have been

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particularly employs itself in the delineation of pleasantries, allows severer ideas to escape, because the faculty of distinguishing objects infinitely minute, almost always supposes the impossibility of embracing objects, which are infinitely grand; whence it must be concluded that the serious is the true criterion of human genius, and exhibits our true nature. "Man that is born of a woman, hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery."

There is only one comic writer, who walks at the side of Sophocles and Corneille—it is Molière; but it is remarkable that his comedies, entitled Tartuffe and the Misanthrope, greatly approach towards tragedy from their sentiment, and if I may be allowed the expression in such a case, from their gravity.

The English highly esteem the comic character of Falstaff, in the Merry Wives of Windsor. In fact it is well designed, though

able to write comedy. Rowe, for instance, whose tragic powers are indisputable (witness his Fair Penitent and Jane Shore) completely failed in the Biter, which was the only comedy he ever wrote.—EDITOR.

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often unnatural, low, and *outré*. There are two ways of laughing at the faults of mankind. The one is first to bring forward the ridiculous foibles of our nature, and then to point out its good qualities. This is the mode adopted by English writers; it is the foundation of the humour displayed by Sterne and Fielding, which sometimes ends in drawing tears from the reader. The other consists in exhibiting praiseworthy features at first, and adding in succession, a display of so many ridiculous follies as to make us forget the better qualities, and lose at last all esteem for the noblest talents and the highest virtues. This is the French manner—it is the comedy of Voltaire—it is the *Nihil mirari* which disgraces our dramatic productions.

The partisans of Shakspeare, who so much extol his genius both in tragedy and comedy, appear to me as if they much deceived themselves, when they boast that his style is so natural. He is, I grant, natural in sentiment and thought, but never in expression, some few fine scenes excepted, in which he rises to his greatest height; and even in these his language is often affected.

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He has all the faults of the Italians of his age, and is eminently defective in simplicity. His descriptions are inflated and distorted, frequently betraying the man of bad education, who is ignorant of common grammar and the exact use of words, and who combines, at hazard, poetic expressions with things of the most trivial nature. Is it not lamentable that such an enlightened nation, which gave birth to critics like Pope and Addison, should be in extacies with the character of the starved apothecary in Romeo and Juliet? It is the most hideous and disgusting burlesque; though I allow that a ray of light peeps through it, as is the case with all the shadows of Shakspeare. Romeo makes a reflection upon this miserable man, who clings so closely to life though loaded with all its miseries. It is the same sentiment which Homer puts with so much simplicity into the mouth of Achilles, while in the regions of Tartarus. "I would rather be the slave of a labourer on earth, and lead a life of penury, than reign the sovereign of the land of shades."

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It remains to consider Shakspeare with reference to the dramatic art, and after having been an eulogist, I may now be allowed to become a critic.

All that has been said in praise of Shakspeare, as a dramatic author, is comprised in this passage of Dr. Johnson: "Shakspeare has no heroes. His scenes are occupied only by men, who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the occasion. Even where the agency is supernatural, the dialogue is level with life. Shakspeare's plays are not, in the critical and rigorous sense, either tragedies or comedies, but compositions of a distinct kind; exhibiting the real state of sublunary nature, which partakes of good and evil, joy and sorrow, mingled with endless variety of proportion, and innumerable modes of combination; and expressing the course of the world, in which the loss of one is the gain of another; in which, at the same time, the reveller is hastening to his wine, and the mourner burying his friend; in which the ma-

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dignity of one is sometimes defeated by the frolic of another; and many mischiefs and benefits are done and hindered without design."

Such is the literary paradox of Shakspeare's admirers, and their whole argument tends to prove that there are no dramatic rules, or that the art is not an art. When Voltaire reproached himself with having opened the gate to mediocrity, by too highly praising Shakspeare, he doubtless meant to say that by banishing all rules and returning to pure nature, nothing was more easy than to equal the best plays of the English nation. If, in order to attain the summit of the dramatic art, it is only requisite to heap together incongruous scenes, without consequence or connexion, to blend the low with the noble, to mingle burlesque with the pathetic, to station a water-carrier near a monarch and a vender of vegetables at the side of a queen, who may not reasonably hope to become the rival of Sophocles and Racine? Whoever finds himself so situated in society as to see much of men and things, if he will only take the trouble of retracing the events of a single day, his conversa-

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tions with the artisan or the minister, the soldier or the prince—if he will only recal the objects which passed under his eyes, the ball and the funeral procession, the luxury of the rich and the distress of the poor—if he will do this, I say, he will at once have composed a drama in Shakspeare's style. It may perhaps be deficient in genius, but if Shakspeare be not discovered in the piece as a writer, his dramatic skill will be exactly imitated.

It is necessary, therefore, to be first persuaded that there is an *art* in composition for the stage or press, that this art necessarily contains its *genera*, and that each *genus* has its rules. Let no one say that these *genera* and rules are arbitrary, for they are the produce of Nature herself. Art has only separated that, which Nature has confounded, selecting the most beautiful features without swerving from the likeness of the great model. Perfection tends in no degree towards the destruction of truth; and it may be said that Racine, with all the excellence of his *art*, is more *natural* than Shakspeare, as the Belvidere Apollo, in all his gran-

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deur of divinity, possesses more of the human form and air than a coarse Egyptian statue.

But if Shakspeare, say his defenders, sins against rules, confounds all the *genera* of the art, and destroys verisimilitude, he at least produces more bustle in his scenes, and infuses more terror than the French.

I will not examine to what extent this assertion is true, or whether the liberty of saying or doing every thing is not a natural consequence of this multitude of characters. I will not examine whether, in Shakspeare's plays, all proceeds rapidly towards the catastrophe; whether the plot is ravelled and unravelled with art, by incessantly prolonging and forwarding the interest excited in the minds of the audience. I will only say that if our tragedies be really deficient as to incidents (which I by no means allow) it is principally ascribable to the subjects of them; but this does not prove that we ought to introduce upon our stage the monstrosities of the man, whom Voltaire called a *drunken savage*. A single beauty in Shakspeare does not atone for his innumerable faults. A gothic monument

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may impart pleasure by its obscurity, and even by the deformity of its proportion; but no one would think of chusing it as a model for a palace.

It is particularly contended that Shakspeare is a great master in the art of causing tears to flow. I do not know whether it is the first of arts to make a person weep, according to the way in which that expression is now understood. Those are genuine tears which poetry produces, but it is necessary that there should be as much admiration as sorrow in the mind of the person who sheds them. When Sophocles presents to my view Œdipus covered with blood, my heart is ready to break; but my ear is struck with a gentle melancholy, and my eyes are enchanted by a spectacle transcendantly fine. I experience pleasure and pain at the same moment. I have before me a frightful truth, and yet I feel that it is only an ingenious imitation of an action, which does not exist, perhaps never existed. Hence my tears flow with delight. I weep, but it is while listening to the accents of the Muses. Those daughters of

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Heaven weep also; but they do not disfigure their divine faces by grimace. The ancients depicted even their Furies with beautiful countenances, apparently because there is a moral beauty in remorse.

While discussing this important subject, let me be allowed to say a few words respecting the quarrel which at present divides the literary world. Part of our men of letters admire none but foreign works, while the other part lean strongly to our own school. According to the former, the writers, who existed during the reign of Louis XIV. had not sufficient vivacity in their style, and betrayed a poverty of conception. According to the others, all this pretended vivacity, all these efforts of the present day, towards the attainment of new ideas, are only decadence and corruption. One party rejects all rules, the other recals them all.

To the former it may be observed that an author is lost beyond redemption if he abandons the great models, which can alone keep us within the delicate bounds of taste, and that it is erroneous to think a style possessed of vivacity which

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proceeds *ad infinitum* in exclamations and interrogations. The second age of Latin literature had the same pretensions as ours. It is certain that Tacitus, Seneca, and Lucan possess a more varied style of colouring than Livy, Cicero and Virgil. They affect the same conciseness of ideas and brilliancy of expression, which we at present endeavour to attain. They load their descriptions; they feel a pleasure in forming pictures to the "mind's eye;" they abound in sentiment, for it is always during corrupt times that morality is most talked of. Ages, however, have passed away, and without regard to the *thinkers* of Trajan's time, the palm is awarded to the reign of Augustus, in which imagination and the arts flourished at large. If examples were instructive, I could add that another cause of decay in Latin literature was the confusion of dialects in the Roman empire. When the Gauls sat in the Senate; when within the walls of Rome, which was become the capital of the world, every jargon might be heard from the Gothic to the Parthian, it may easily be supposed that all taste for the beauties of Horace

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and Cicero was at an end. The similarity is striking. At least, if it should still remain fashionable in France to study foreign idioms, and inundate us with translations, our language will soon lose its florid simplicity, and those gallicisms, which constitute its genius and grace.

One of the errors, into which men of letters have fallen, when in search of unbeaten roads, arises from the uncertainty which they observed to exist as to the principles of taste. A person is a great author in one journal, and a miserable scribbler in another. One calls him a brilliant genius, another a declaimer. Whole nations vary in opinion. Foreigners deny that Racine was a man of genius, or that his numbers are possessed of harmony; and we judge of English writers in a very different way to the English themselves. It would astonish the French if I were to mention what French authors are admired and despised in England.

All this, however, ought not to create an uncertainty of opinion, and cause original principles to be abandoned, under a pretext of there being no established standard of taste. There is a

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sure basis, which may always be relied upon, namely, ancient literature. This remains an invariable model. It is round those, who point out such great examples, that we ought at once to rally, if we would escape barbarism. If the partisans of the old school go a little too far in their dislike of foreign literature, it may be overlooked. Upon this principle it was that Boileau opposed Tasso, asserting that the age in which he lived, had too strong a propensity to fall into the errors of that author.

Still by ceding something to an adversary, shall we not more easily bring public opinion back to good models? May it now be allowed that imagination and the arts were indulged to too great an extent in the reign of Louis XIV? Was not the art of *painting nature*, as it is now termed, almost unknown at that time? Why should it not be admitted that the style of the present day has really assumed a more perfect form, that the liberty of discussing any subject has brought a greater number of truths into circulation, that the sciences have imparted more firmness to the human mind, and more precision

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to human ideas? I know that there is danger in allowing all this, and that if one point be yielded, it is difficult to know where to stop; but still is it not possible that a man, by proceeding cautiously between the two lines, and always leaning rather towards the ancient than the modern one, may unite the two schools, and create from them the genius of a new era? Be this as it may, every effort to produce so great a revolution will be abortive if we remain irreligious. Imagination and sentiment are essentially combined with religion. A species of literature, from which the charms of tenderness are banished, can never be otherwise than dry, cold, and merely possessed of mediocrity.*

* The reader will have found in the foregoing dissertation a considerable portion of genuine critical acumen, mingled with no small share of the national partialities and prejudices, which M. de Chateaubriand so freely ascribes to others. When Voltaire's earlier observations are against Shakspeare it is declared that, while young, his criticisms were "replete with justice, taste, and impartiality," but when he is not sufficiently abusive, his later attacks are preferred. Shakspeare is placed, by M. de Chateaubriand,

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III.—BEATTIE.

THE genius of Scotland has, during the present age, sustained with honour the literature, which Pope, Addison, Steele, Rowe, &c. had elevated to a high degree of perfection. England can boast of no historians superior to Hume and Robertson, and of no poets more richly gifted than Thomson and Beattie. The latter, who never left his native desert, was a minister and a professor of Philosophy, resident at a small town

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below such crude authors as Garnier and Hardy. He is allowed to have "regained the dramatic art after it had been lost in the lapse of ages," but this is only for the purpose of describing Molière as having brought it to perfection. Racine is declared to be more natural than Shakspeare, and it is deemed literary treason that the latter should have been elevated to the side of Corneille. I venture, however, to doubt whether a competent judge, *of any nation*, can peruse the scenes, from which M. de Chateaubriand himself has made extracts to shew their comparative skill, without giving a decisive preference to our countryman. In spite of "the *monstrosities*" of this "*barbarian*" as M. de C. calls him, or this *drunken savage*, if he prefers Voltaire's expression to his own, may the day soon arrive when Britain can boast of possessing another dramatic genius equal to Shakspeare!

EDITOR.

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in the north of Scotland. He is distinguished as a poet by a character entirely novel, and when he touched his lyre, he in some degree brought back the tones of the ancient bards. His principal and as it were only work, is a small poem entitled the Minstrel, or the Progress of Genius. Beattie wished to pourtray the effects of the Muse on a young mountain shepherd, and to retrace the inspirations which he himself had doubtless felt. The original idea of the Minstrel is charming, and most of the descriptions are very agreeable. The poem is written in metrical stanzas, like the old Scotch ballads,* a circumstance which adds to its singularity. It is true that the author, like all foreigners, is sometimes too diffuse, and sometimes deficient in taste. Dr.

* The stanza of Beattie's Minstrel is an avowed copy of the one used in the Fairy Queen. "I have endeavoured," says the author, "to imitate Spenser in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity and variety of his composition. This measure pleases my ear, and seems, from its Gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the poem." *Editor.*

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Beattie likes to enlarge on common maxims of morality, without possessing the art of giving them a new appearance. In general, men of brilliant imagination and tender feelings are not sufficiently profound in their thoughts, or forcible in their reasoning. Ardent passions or great genius are necessary towards the conception of great ideas. There is a certain calmness of heart and gentleness of nature, which seem to exceed the sublime.

A work like the Minstrel can hardly be analyzed; but I will extract a few stanzas from the first book of this pleasing production. I would rather employ myself in displaying the beauties of an author than in nicely investigating his faults. I would rather extol a writer than debase him in the reader's eyes. Moreover, instruction is better conveyed by admiration than censure; for the one reveals the presence of genius, while the other confines itself to a discovery of blemishes which all eyes could have perceived. It is in the beautiful arrangements of Heaven that the Divinity is perceived, and not by a few irregularities of nature.

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"Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep, where Fame's proud temple shines afar;
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war;
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar;
In life's low vale remote has pin'd alone,
Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown?

And yet the langour of inglorious days
Not equally oppressive is to all:
Him, who ne'er listen'd to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.
There are, who, deaf to mad Ambition's call,
Would shrink to hear the obstreperous trump of Fame:
Supremely blest, if to their portion fall
Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
Had he, whose simple tale these artless lines proclaim.

This sapient age disclaims all classic lore;
Else I should here, in cunning phrase display
How forth THE MINSTREL fared in days of yore,
Right glad of heart, though homely in array;
His waving locks and beard all hoary grey:
And from his bended shoulder decent hung
His harp, the sole companion of his way,
Which to the whistling wind responsive rung;
And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

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Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of Pride,
That a poor Villager inspires my strain;
With thee let Pageantry and Power abide:
The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign;
Where through wild groves at eve the lonely swain
Enraptur'd roams, to gaze on nature's charms.
They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain;
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
Yet horror screams from his discordant throat.
Rise sons of harmony and hail the morn,
While warbling larks on russet pinions float;
Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
Where the linets carol from the hill.
O let them ne'er with artificial note,
To please a tyrant strain their little bill,
But sing what Heaven inspires, and wander where they will!

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand;
Nor was perfection made for man below.
Yet all her schemes with incest are plann'd,
Good counteracting ill, and gladness woe.
With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow;
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise;
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow:
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the eyes."

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To this extract I will add a few more stanzas towards the end of the first book:

" Oft when the winter storm had ceas'd to rave,
He roam'd the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from th' Atlantic wave
High-tow'ring, sail along th' horizon blue:
Where, midst the changeful scenery, ever new,
Fancy a thousand wond'rous forms descries,
More wildly great than ever pencil drew.
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glitt'ring cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts rise.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way.
List'ning, with pleasing dread, to the deep roar
Of the wide-welt'ring waves. In black array
When sulphurous clouds roll'd on th' autumnal day,
Even then he hasten'd from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er heaven's rending arch the rattling thunder ran.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe, when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclin'd,

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Sooth'd with the soft notes warbling in the wind,
Ah then, all jollity seem'd noise and folly,
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refin'd,
Ah what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charms compar'd of heavenly melancholy!

Is there a heart that music cannot melt?
Alas! how is that rugged heart forlorn!
Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt
Of solitude and melancholy born?
He needs not woo the Muse; he is her scorn.
The sophist's rope of cobwebs he shall twine;
Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page; or mourn,
And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine;
Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton swine.

For Edwin, Fate a nobler doom had plann'd;
Song was his favourite and first pursuit.
The wild harp rang to his advent'rous hand,
And languish'd to his breath the plaintive flute.
His infant muse, though artless, was not mute:
Of elegance, as yet he took no care;
For this of time and culture is the fruit;
And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare;
As in some future verse I purpose to declare."

It will be seen from the last stanza that Beat-

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tie intended to continue his poem, and he did in fact write a second canto sometime afterwards, but it is very inferior to the first. Edwin having attained manhood, takes walks "of wider circuit" than before.

"One evening, as he fram'd the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trod;
A vale appear'd below, a deep retired abode.

Thither he hied, enamour'd of the scene,
For rocks on rocks pil'd, as by magic spell,
Here scorch'd with lightening, there with ivy green,
Fenc'd from the north and east this savage dell.
Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long long groves eternal murmur made;
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, thro' the cliffs, the eye, remote, survey'd,
Blue hills, and glitt'ring waves, and skies in gold array'd.

Along this narrow valley you might see
The wild deer sporting on the meadow ground,
And, here and there, a solitary tree,
Or mossy stone, or rock with woodbine crown'd.

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Oft did the cliffs reverberate the sound
Of parted fragments tumbling from on high;
And from the summit of that craggy mound
The perching eagle oft was heard to cry,
Or on resounding wings to shoot athwart the sky.

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
Its flow'ry bosom to the noon-day beam,
Where many a rose-bud rears its blushing head,
And herbs for food with future plenty teem.
Sooth'd by the lulling sound of grove and stream,
Romantic visions swarm on Edwin's soul:
He minded not the sun's last trembling gleam,
Nor heard from far the twilight curfew toll;
When slowly on his ear these moving accents stole."

It is the voice of an aged hermit, who after having known the illusions of the world, has buried himself in this retreat, for the purpose of indulging in meditation, and singing the praises of his Creator. This venerable old man instructs the young troubadour, and reveals to him the secret of his own genius. It is evident that this was a most happy idea, but the execution has not answered the first design of the author. The

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hermit speaks too long, and makes very trite observations with regard to the grandeur and misery of human life. Some passages are, however, to be found in this second book which recal the charm created by the first. The last strophes of it are consecrated to the memory of a friend, whom the poet had lost. It appears that Beattie was often destined to feel the weight of sorrows. The death of his only son affected him deeply and withdrew him entirely from the service of the Muses. He still lived on the rocks of Morven, but these rocks no longer inspired his song. Like Ossian, after the death of Oscar, he suspended his harp on the branches of an oak. It is said that his son evinced great poetical talents; perhaps he was the young minstrel, whom a father had feelingly described, and whose steps he too soon ceased to trace upon the summit of the mountain.

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RECOLLECTIONS

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ON THE ISLAND OF GRACIOZA,

ONE OF THE AZORES.

In the spring of 1791 I made a voyage to America. Before the vessel, which conveyed me, reached her destination, we were in want of water, as well as provisions; and finding ourselves near the Azores, resolved to touch there. Several priests were passengers in the same ship; they were emigrating to Baltimore, under the guidance of the superior St... M. N. Among these priests were some foreigners, particularly Mr. T... a young Englishman of an excellent family, who had lately become a convert to the Roman faith.

The history of this youth is too singular not to be recorded, and will perhaps be more particularly interesting to the English reader.

Mr. T... was the son of a Scotch woman and an English clergyman, who was, I believe,

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the rector of W. though I have in vain tried to find him, and may possibly have forgotten the right names. The son served in the artillery, and would no doubt have soon been distinguished by his merit. He was a painter, a musician, a mathematician, and master of several languages. He united with the advantages of a tall and elegant person the talents which are useful, and those which make us court the society of their possessor.

M. N. superior of St..... having visited London on business, I believe in the year 1790, became acquainted with young T... This monk had that warmth of soul which easily makes proselytes of men possessing the vivid imagination by which T... was distinguished. It was determined that the latter should repair to Paris, send the resignation of his commission from that place to the Duke of Richmond, embrace the Catholic religion, and, after entering into holy orders, accompany M. N. to America. The project was put in execution, and T... in spite of his mother's letters, which he could not read without tears, embarked for the new world.

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One of those chances, which decide our destiny, caused me to sail in the same vessel as this young man. It was not long before I discovered his good qualities, and I could not cease to be astonished at the singular circumstances, by which a wealthy Englishman of good birth should have thus been thrown among a troop of Catholic priests. T... perceived, on his part, I understood him; but he was afraid of M. N. that who seemed averse to too great an intimacy between his disciple and myself.

Meanwhile we proceeded on our voyage, and had not yet been able to open our hearts to each other. At length we were one night upon deck without any of the other priests. T... related to me his adventures, and we interchanged assurances of sincere friendship.

T... was, like myself, an admirer of nature. We used to pass whole nights in conversation upon deck, when all were asleep on board the vessel, except the sailors upon duty, when all the sails were furled, and the ship rolled dully through the calm, while an immense sea extended all around us into shade, and repeated the

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magnificient illumination of the star-sprinkled sky. Our conversations, at such times, were perhaps not quite unworthy of the grand spectacle which we had before our eyes; and ideas escaped us which we should be ashamed of expressing in society, but which I should be happy to recal and write down. It was in one of these charming nights when we were about fifty leagues from the coast of Virginia, and scudding under a light breeze from the west, which bore to us the aromatic odour of the land, that T... composed for a French Romance, an air which exhaled the very spirit of the scene that inspired it. I have preserved this valuable composition, and when I happen to repeat it, emotions arise in my breast which few people can comprehend.

Before this period, the wind having driven us considerably to the north, we found ourselves under the necessity of then also taking in water, &c. which we did at Saint Peter's Island, on the coast of Newfoundland. During the fortnight we were on shore, T... and I used to ramble among the mountains of this frightful island, and lose ourselves amidst the fogs that perpetually prevail

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there. The sensitive imagination of my friend found pleasure in these sombre and romantic scenes. Sometimes, when we wandered in the midst of clouds and storms, listening to the roaring waves which we could not discern, and lost ourselves upon a bleak desolate heath, or gazed at the red torrent which rolled among the rocks, T.... would imagine himself to be the bard of Cona, and in his capacity of Demi-Scotchman, begin to declaim from Ossian, or sing to wild airs, composed upon the spot, passages from that work. His music often led me back to ancient times—"'Twas like the memory of joys that are past, pleasing and mournful to the soul." I am extremely sorry that I did not write down the notes of some of these extraordinary songs, which would have astonished amateurs and artists. I remember that we passed a whole afternoon in raising four large stones, to the memory of an unfortunate man, in a little episode after the manner of Ossian, taken from my *Pictures of Nature*,—a production, known to some men of letters, which has been destroyed. We thought of Rousseau, who amused himself

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with overturning the rocks in his island, that he might see what was under them. If we had not the genius of the author of Emily, we had at least his simplicity. At other times we botanized.

On our arrival at Baltimore, T. . . . without bidding me farewell, and without appearing to feel the intimacy which had subsisted between us, left me one morning, and I have never seen him since. When I retired to England, I endeavoured to discover his family, but in vain. I had no wish but to ascertain that he was happy, and take my leave; for when I knew him I was not what I now am. At that time I rendered him some service, and it is not congenial with my disposition to remind a person of the obligations conferred by me when rich, now that misfortunes have overtaken me. I waited upon the Bishop of London, but in the registers, which he permitted me to examine, I could find no clergyman of T.'s name. I must have mistaken the orthography. All I know is that he had a brother, and that two of his sisters had places at court. I have met with few men, whose hearts

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harmonized more with mine than that of T. He had, nevertheless an expression in his eye of some concealed thought, which I did not like.

On the 6th of May, about eight o'clock in the morning, we discovered the Peak of the island bearing the same name, which is said to surpass in height that of Teneriffe. Soon afterwards we perceived lower land, and towards noon cast anchor in a bad road, upon a rocky bottom, and in forty-five fathoms water.

The island of Gracioza, before which we lay, is composed of small hills, that swell out towards their summits, so as to resemble the graceful curving form of Corinthian vases. They were, at the period of which I am speaking, covered with the fresh verdure of grain; and it shed a pleasant odour peculiar to the Azores. In the midst of these undulating carpets, appeard symetrical divisions of the fields, formed of volcanic stones, in colour black and white, heaped one upon another to the height of a man's breast. Wild fig-trees, with their violet leaves and little purple figs arranged upon the branches like knots of flowers upon a chaplet,

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were scattered here and there through the country. An abbey was visible at the top of a mountain, and at its base in a nook the red roofs of the little town Santa Cruz. The whole island, with all its bays, capes, creeks and promontories, was reflected from the waves. Great naked rocks constituted its exterior boundary, and formed a contrast, by their smoky colour, to the festoons of spray hanging to them, and appearing in the sun like silver lace. The peak of Peak Island, beyond Gracioza, majestically raised its head above a mass of clouds, and formed the background of the picture. A sea of emerald and a sky of the purest azure supplied the main tints of the scene, while the numerous sea-fowl and the grey crows of the Azores flew screaming and croaking round our vessel as she lay at anchor, or cut the surface of the billow with their wings expanded in the shape of a sickle, augmenting around us noise, motion and life.

It was decided that I should land as interpreter with T. another young man, and the second captain. The boat was hoisted out, and the

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sailors began to row us towards the shore, which was about two miles from the ship. It was not long before we observed a bustle on the coast, and a pinnace approaching us. The moment it came within hail, we distinguished in it a number of monks. They addressed us in Portugueze, Italian and English; and we replied in these three languages, that we were Frenchmen. Great alarm prevailed in the island. Our vessel was the first of large bulk that had ever appeared there, and ventured to anchor in the dangerous road where she now was. The new tri-coloured flag had likewise never been seen in this part of the world before; and the inhabitants knew not but that we might be from Algiers or Tunis. When they saw that we wore the human form, and understood what was said to us, their joy was universal. The monks invited us into their pinnace, and we soon reached Santa Cruz, where we landed with difficulty on account of a violent surge which continually beats there.

All the inhabitants of the island ran to see us. Four or five unhappy men, who had been hastily armed with pikes, formed our guard.

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The uniform of his Majesty attracting particular notice, I passed for the important man of the deputation. We were conducted to the Governor's miserable house, where his Excellency, who was attired in an old green dress which had formerly been ornamented with gold lace, gave us an audience of reception, and graciously permitted us to purchase the articles we wanted.

After this ceremony we were dismissed, and the honest monks conducted us to a large hotel, which was neat, commodious and much more like the Governor's palace than the one he inhabited.

T.... had found a fellow countryman. The brother, who was most active for us, was a Jersey sailor, whose vessel had been wrecked at Gracioza several years before. He was the only one of the crew who escaped death, and being not deficient, as to intelligence, he perceived that there was only one trade in the island, that of the monks. He resolved, therefore, to become one, listened with great docility to the instructions of the holy fathers, learnt Portuguese as well as a few words of Latin, and being recom-

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mended by the circumstance of his belonging to England, this wandering sheep was admitted into the sacred fold.

As it was long since he had spoken his own language, he was delighted to find any one that understood it. He walked with us in the island, and took us to his convent.

Half Gracioza appeared to me, without much exaggeration, to be peopled with monks, and the following circumstance may serve to convey an idea of the ignorance, in which these good fathers remained at the close of the eighteenth century.

We had been mysteriously conducted to a small organ in the parish church, under the idea that we had never seen so curious an instrument. The organist took his seat with a triumphant air, and played a most miserable discordant sort of litany, trying all the time to discover our admiration in our looks. We appeared to be extremely surprised. T.... then modestly approached, and seemed just to touch the keys with great respect. The organist made signs to him, as if saying: "Take care." All at once

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T.... displayed the harmony of a celebrated passage in the compositions of Pleyel. It would be difficult to imagine a more amusing scene. The organist almost fell to the earth; the monks stood openmouthed with pale and lengthened visages, while the brothers in attendance made the most ridiculous gestures of astonishment around us.

Having embarked our provisions on the following day, we ourselves returned on board, accompanied by the good fathers, who took charge of our letters for Europe, and left us with great protestations of friendship. The vessel had been endangered, during the preceding night, by a brisk gale from the East. We wished to weigh anchor, but, as we expected, lost it. Such was the end of our expedition.

A few words concerning the Cataract of Canada.

THIS famous cataract is the finest in the known world. It is formed by the river Niagara, which proceeds from Lake Erie, and throws itself into the Ontario. The fall is about

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nine miles from the latter lake. Its perpendicular height may be about two hundred feet; but the cause of its violence is that, from Lake Erie to the cataract, the river constantly flows with a rapid declination for almost six leagues: so that, at the place of fall, it is more like an impetuous sea than a river, and a hundred thousand torrents seem to be rushing towards the gaping gulphs. The cataract is divided into two branches, and forms a curve, in the shape of a horse-shoe, the length of which is about half a mile. Between the two falls is an enormous rock hollowed out below, which hangs with all its firs, over the chaos of the waters. The mass of the river, which precipitates itself on the south side, is collected into the form of a large cylinder at the moment it quits the brink, then rolls out in snowy whiteness, and shines in the sun with every variety of prismatic colours. That, which falls on the northern side, descends in a terrific cloud like a column of water at the deluge. Innumerable bows are to be seen in the sky, curving and crossing over the abyss, and from it proceeds a horrid roar which is heard to the

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distance of sixty miles around. The water, thus furiously falling on the rock beneath, recoils in clouds of whirling spray, which mount above the summits of the forest, and resemble the thick smoke of a tremendous conflagration. Enormous rocks, towering upwards like gigantic phantoms, decorate the sublime scene. Wild walnut trees, of a reddish and scaly appearance, find the means of desolate existence upon these fossil skeletons. Scarcely a living animal is seen in the neighbourhood, except eagles, which, as they hover above the cataract in search of prey, are overpowered by the current of air, and forced with giddy fall to the bottom of the abyss.

The spotted *Carcajou*, suspended by its long tail from the extremity of a lower branch, tries to catch the fragments of drowned carcases which are thrown ashore by the boiling surge, such as those of elks and bears; while rattlesnakes announce, by their baleful sound, that they are lurking on every side.

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VISIT

TO THE COUNTRY OF THE SAVAGES.

I took my departure for the country of the Savages in a packet boat, which was to convey me from New-York to Albany by Hudson's river. The passengers were numerous and agreeable, consisting of several women and some American Officers. A fresh breeze conducted us gently towards our destination. Towards the evening of the first day, we assembled upon deck, to partake of a collation of fruit and milk. The women seated themselves upon the benches, and the men were stationed at their feet. The conversation was not long kept up. I have always remarked that when nature exhibits a sublime or beautiful prospect, the spectators involuntarily become silent. Suddenly one of the company exclaimed: "Near that place Major André was executed." My ideas instantly took another turn. A very pretty American lady was intreated to sing the ballad, which describes the story of

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that unfortunate young man. She yielded to our solicitation; her voice evidently betrayed her timidity, but it was exceedingly replete with sweet and tender sensibility.

The sun now set, and we were in the midst of lofty mountains. Here and there huts were seen, suspended over the abysses, but they soon disappeared among the clouds of mingled white and rosy hue, which horizontally flitted past these dwellings. When the summits of the rocks and firs were discovered above these clouds, one might have fancied them to be islands floating in the air. The majestic river, the tides of which run North and South, lay outstretched before us in a strait line, inclosed between two exactly parallel banks. Suddenly it took a turn to the West, winding its golden waves around a mountain which overlooked the river with all its plants, and had the appearance of a large *bouquet*, tied at its base with azure riband. We preserved a profound silence; for my own part, I hardly ventured to breathe. Nothing interrupted the plaintive song of the fair passenger, except the sound (of which we were hardly sensible) made by the vessel, as it glided before a

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light breeze through the water. Sometimes the voice acquired an additional swell when we steered near the bank, and in two or three places it was repeated by a slight echo. The ancients would have imagined that the soul of André, attracted by this impressive melody, felt a pleasure in murmuring its last notes among the mountains. The idea of this brave and unfortunate man, who was a lover and a poet, who died for his country in the flower of his age, regretted by his fellow citizens and honoured by the tears of Washington, spread over this romantic scene a softer tint. The American officers and I had tears in our eyes—I from the effect of the delicious state of mind into which I was plunged—They no doubt from the recollection of their country's past troubles, which doubled the calmness of the present moment. They could not, without a sort of ecstacy, contemplate a district, lately covered with battalions in glittering arms, and resounding with the noise of war, now buried in profound tranquility, lighted by the last fires of day, decorated with all the pomp of nature, animated by the soft whistle of Virginian night-

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ingales, and the cooing of wild pigeons; while the simple inhabitants were seated on the point of a rock, at some distance from their cottages, and quietly observed our vessel as it passed along the river beneath them.

The tour, which I made on this occasion, was in fact only a prelude to a journey of much greater importance, the plan of which I communicated, on my return, to M. de Malesherbes, who was to have laid it before government. I intended nothing less than to decide, by a land investigation, the great question of a passage from the South sea into the Atlantic by the North. It is known that, in spite of the efforts made by Captain Cook, and subsequent navigators, this point has always remained doubtful. In 1786 a merchantman pretended to have entered an interior sea of North America at 48 lat. N. and those on board asserted that all, which had been considered as continental coast to the North of California, was a long chain of islands extremely close to each other. On the other hand, a traveller from Hudson's Bay saw the sea at 72° lat. N. at the mouth of the river

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Cuivre. It is said that a frigate arrived last summer, which had been sent by the British Admiralty to ascertain the truth or fallacy of the discovery made by the merchantman above mentioned, and that this frigate confirms the truth of Cook's reports. Be this as may, I will just state what was my plan.

If government had favoured the project, I should have embarked for New-York. There I should have had two immense covered waggons made, to be drawn by four yoke of oxen. I should have also procured six small horses, such as those which I used on my first expedition. I should have taken with me three European servants, and three savages of the Five-Nations. Reasons operate to prevent the mention of some particulars of the plan which it was my intention to follow; the whole forms a small volume in my possession, which would not be useless to those who explore unknown regions. Suffice it to say that I would have renounced all ideas of traversing the deserts of America, if it would have cost the simple inhabitants a single tear. I should have wished that among the savages, *the*

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man with a long beard might, long after my departure, be spoken of as the friend and benefactor of the human-race.

When I had made every preparation, I should have set out directly towards the West, proceeding along the lakes of Canada to the source of the Mississippi, which I should have ascertained. Then descending by the plains of Upper Louisiana as far as the 40th degree of Northern latitude, I should have resumed my course to the West, so as to have reached the coast of the South Sea a little above the head of the gulph of California. Following the coast and keeping the sea always in sight, I should next have proceeded due North, thereby turning my back on New Mexico. If no discovery had altered my line of progress, I should have pursued my way to the mouth of Cook's Inlet, and thence to the river Cuivre in 72 degrees lat. N. Finally, if I had no where found a passage, and could not double the most Northern Cape of America, I should have re-entered the United States by Hudson's Bay, Labrador and Canada.

Such was the immense and perilous voyage,

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which I proposed to undertake for the service of my country and Europe. I calculated that it would occupy (all accidents apart) five to six years. There can be no doubt of its utility. I should have given an account of the three kingdoms of Nature, of the people and their manners. I should have sketched the principal views, &c.

As to the perils of the journey, they were undoubtedly great, and those, who make nice calculations on this subject, will probably not be disposed to travel among savage nations. People alarm themselves, however, too much in this respect. When I was exposed to any danger, in America, it was always local and caused by my own imprudence, not by the inhabitants. For instance, when I was at the cataract of Niagara, the Indian ladder being broken which had formerly been there, I wished, in spite of my guide's representations, to descend to the bottom of the fall by means of a rock, the craggy points of which projected. It was about two hundred feet high, and I made the attempt. In spite of the roaring cataract, and frightful abyss which gaped beneath me, my head did not swim, and I

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descended about forty feet, but here the rock became smooth and vertical; nor were there any longer roots or fissures for my feet to rest upon. I remained hanging all my length by my hands, neither being able to reascend nor proceed, feeling my fingers open by degrees from the weight of my body, and considering death inevitable. There are few men, who have, in the course of their lives, passed two such minutes as I experienced over the yawning horrors of Niagara. My hands at length opened and I fell. By most extraordinary good fortune I alighted on the naked rock. It was hard enough to have dashed me in pieces, and yet I did not feel much injured. I was within half an inch of the abyss, yet had not rolled into it; but when the cold water began to penetrate to my skin, I perceived that I had not escaped so easily as I at first imagined. I felt insupportable pain in my left arm; I had broken it above the elbow. My guide, who observed me from above, and to whom I made signs, ran to look for some savages, who with much trouble drew me up by birch cords, and carried me to their habitations.

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This was not the only risk I ran at Niagara. On arriving at the cataract, I alighted and fastened my horse's bridle round my arm. As I leaned forward to look down, a rattle-snake moved in the neighbouring bushes. The horse took fright, reared on his hind legs and approached the edge of the precipice. I could not disengage my arm from the bridle, and the animal, with increasing alarm, drew me after him. His feet were already on the point of slipping over the brink of the gulph, and he was kept from destruction by nothing but the reins. My doom seemed to be fixed, when the animal, astonished at the new danger which he all at once perceived, made a final effort, and sprung ten feet from the edge of the precipice.

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A NIGHT

AMONG THE SAVAGES OF AMERICA.

It is a feeling, natural on the part of the unfortunate, to aim at the illusions of happiness by the recollection of past pleasures. When I feel weary of existence, when I feel my heart torn by the effects of a commerce with mankind, I involuntarily turn aside, and cast a look of regret. Enchanting meditations! Secret and ineffable charms of a soul which enjoys itself, it was amidst the immense deserts of America that I completely tasted you! Every one boasts of loving liberty, and hardly any one has a just idea of it. When I travelled among the Indian tribes of Canada—when I quitted the habitations of Europeans, and found myself, for the first time, alone amidst boundless forests, having all nature, as it were prostrate at my feet, a strange revolution took place in my sensations. I was seized with a sort of delirium, and followed no track,

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but went from tree to tree, and indifferently to the right or left, saying to myself: "Here there is no multiplicity of roads, no towns, no confined houses, no Presidents, Republics and Kings, no laws and no human beings.—Human beings! Yes—some worthy savages, who care nothing about me, nor I about them; who, like myself wander wherever inclination leads them, eat when they wish it, and sleep where they please. To ascertain whether I was really in possession of my original rights, I put in practice a thousand acts of human will, as fancy suggested them. These proceedings highly enraged the great Dutchman, who accompanied me as a guide, and who in his soul believed me to be a madman.

Released from the tyrannical yoke of society, I comprehended the charms of that natural independence, far surpassing all the pleasures of which civilized man can have an idea. I comprehended why a savage was unwilling to become an European, why several Europeans had become savages, and why the sublime discussion *on the inequality of conditions* was so little understood by most of our philosophers. It is incredible to what a state of littleness nations and their highly

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boasted institutions were reduced in my eyes. It appeared to me that I was looking at the kingdoms of the earth with an inverted telescope, or rather that I myself was enlarged, exalted, and contemplating, with the eyes of a giant, the remains of my degenerate fellow creatures.

You, who wish to write of mankind, transport yourselves into the deserts. Become for an instant the children of nature—then, and not till then take the pen.

Among the innumerable enjoyments, which I experienced during these travels, one in particular made a lively impression upon my heart.*

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* Almost all that follows is taken from the manuscript of my Travels in America, which perished together with several other incomplete works. Among them I had begun one, *Les Tableaux de la Nature*, which was the history of a savage tribe in Canada, moulded into a sort of romance. The frame, which inclosed these pictures of nature, was entirely new, and the paintings themselves, being strange to our climate, might have merited the indulgence of the reader. Some praise has been bestowed upon my manner of delineating nature, but if the public had seen the work now mentioned, written as it was by fragments on my knee among the savages themselves, in the forests and on the banks of American lakes, I presume to state that

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I was going to see the celebrated cataract of Niagara, and had taken my road through the Indian nations, which inhabit the wilds west of the American plantations. My guides were the sun, a pocket compass, and the Dutchman whom I have mentioned. This man perfectly understood five dialects of the *Huron* language. Our equipage consisted of two horses, to the necks of which we fastened a bell at night, and then allowed them to go at large in the forest. At first I was rather afraid of losing them, but my guide removed this apprehension by pointing out the admirable instinct, which causes these sagacious animals never to wander out of sight of our fire.

One evening, when we conceived that we

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they would probably have found matter more deserving their notice. Of all this work only a few detached leaves remain in my possession, and among them is the Night, which I now insert. I was destined to lose by the revolution fortune, parents, friends, and what is never to be regained when once lost, the detail of reflections as they naturally arose during my travels. Our thoughts are perhaps the only property to be called really our own—even these were taken from me.

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had proceeded so far as to be only about eight or nine leagues from the cataract, we were just about to alight from our horses, that we might prepare our hovel, and light our fire according to the Indian custom. At this moment we perceived a blaze in the woods, and soon afterwards espied some savages seated on the bank of the same stream, which flowed past us. We approached them, and the Dutchman having, by my order, asked permission to pass the night with them, it was granted on the spot. Accordingly we all began our labours together. After having cut branches from the trees, fixed stakes in the ground, stripped off bark to cover our palace, and performed some other general services, each of us turned his attention to his own affairs. I fetched my saddle, which faithfully served as my pillow during the whole journey. The guide attended to our horses, and with regard to his preparations for the night, he was not so delicate as myself, and generally availed himself of some old trunk of a tree for his bed. Our work being finished, we seated ourselves in a circle, with our legs crossed like tailors. In

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the centre of us was an immense fire, at which we prepared our maize for supper. I had a bottle of brandy too, which not a little increased the gay spirits of the savages. They produced in return some legs of bear, and we made a royal repast.

The party was composed of two women with infants at the breast, and three warriors. Two of the latter might be about forty to forty-five years of age, though they appeared to be much older; the third was a young man.

The conversation soon became general, that is to say, by some broken expressions on my part, and by many gestures, an expressive kind of language, which the Indian tribes comprehend with astonishing readiness, and which I learnt among them. The young man alone preserved an obstinate silence, keeping his eyes stedfastly fixed on me. In spite of the black, red, and blue streaks, with which he was disfigured, and the further mutilation of having no ears, it was easy to perceive the noble and sensible expression which animated his countenance. How favorably did I think of him for not liking me! He

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appeared to be mentally reading the history of all the calamities, with which Europeans had overburthened his country.

The two little children, which were entirely naked, had fallen asleep at our feet, before the fire. The women took them gently in their arms, and laid them upon skins, with that maternal care which it was delicious to observe among these pretended savages. The conversation at length died away by degrees, and each person sunk to rest in the place which he had hitherto occupied.

I was, however, an exception, being unable to close my eyes. Hearing the deep breathing of my companions on all sides, I raised my head, and resting on my elbow, contemplated, by the red light of the expiring fire, the sleeping Indians stretched around me. I acknowledge that I found it difficult to refrain from tears. Good young man! How affecting did thy repose appear to me! Thou, who didst seem so feelingly alive to the misfortunes of thy country, wert of too lofty and superior a disposition to suspect a stranger of evil intentions. Europeans, what a

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lesson is this for us! These savages, whom we have pursued with fire and sword, whom our avarice has not even left in possession of a shovel full of earth to cover their dead bodies on all this vast continent heretofore their patrimony—these very savages received their enemy in their hospitable huts, shared with him their miserable repast, and their couch to which remorse was a stranger; enjoying close to him, the sleep of the virtuous. Such virtues are as much above our conventional ones, as the souls of these uncultivated people are superior to those of man in a state of society.

The moon was bright. Heated by my ideas I rose and took a seat at some distance, upon the root of a tree which crept along the side of the rivulet. It was one of those American nights, which the pencil of man never will be able to pourtray, and which I have remembered a hundred times with delight.

The moon had reached the highest point of the Heavens, and a thousand stars glittered in the great clear expanse. At one time the queen of night reposed upon a group of clouds,

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which resembled the summit of lofty mountains crowned with snow. By slow degrees these clouds stretched themselves out, assuming the appearance of waving transparent zones of white satin, or transforming themselves into light frothy flakes, of which countless numbers wandered through the blue plains of the firmament. At another time the aerial vault appeared as if transformed into the sea shore, where horizontal beds, and parallel ridges might be discovered, apparently formed by the regular flux and reflux of the tide. A gust of wind then dispersed the clouds, and they formed themselves into large masses of dazzling whiteness, so soft to the eye, that one almost seemed to feel their delicate elasticity. The landscape around me was not less enchanting. The cerulean velvety light of the moon silently spread over the forest, and at intervals descended among the trees, irradiating in some degree even the deepest thickets. The brook, which flowed at my feet, hiding itself now and then under the umbrageous oaks, sallows and sugar-trees, and re-appearing a little further off, all brilliant from the constellations of

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the night, resembled an azure ribband studded with diamonds, and transversely marked with black lines. On the other side of the stream, in a large natural meadow, the clear light of the moon shone without motion on the turf, extending like a curtain over it. At one moment the birch-trees, which were scattered here and there through the Savanna, were, by the caprice of the breeze, confounded with the soil on which they grew, and enveloped in a sort of grey gauze; at another they ceased to retain this chalky appearance, and buried themselves in obscurity, forming, as it were, islands of floating shade upon a motionless sea of light. Silence and repose prevailed throughout the scene, except when a few leaves fell here and there, or a sudden gust of wind swept past, accompanied occasionally by the dismal note of the owl. At a distance and at intervals too I heard the solemn sound of the cataract at Niagara, which, in the calmness of night, was lengthened out from one desert to another, and expired among the solitary forests.

The astonishing grandeur of this picture

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and the melancholy, which it inspired, are not to be expressed by human language. The most beautiful nights in Europe can convey no idea of it. In vain does the imagination try to roam at large amidst our cultivated plains, for every where the habitations of mankind oppose its wish; but in this deserted region the soul delights to bury and lose itself amidst boundless forests—it loves to wander, by the light of the stars, on the borders of immense lakes, to hover on the roaring gulph of terrific cataracts, to fall with the mighty mass of waters, to mix and confound itself, as it were, with the wild sublimities of Nature.

These enjoyments are too exquisite. Such is our weakness that excess of pleasure becomes painful, as if Nature were afraid of our forgetting that we are men. Absorbed in my existence, or rather wandering entirely from myself, having no distinct sentiment or idea, but an ineffable indescribable sensation, resembling the mental happiness which we are told that we shall feel in another world, I was suddenly recalled to the one which I inhabit. I felt ill, and was con-

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vinced that I must indulge my reverie no further. I now returned to our *Ajouppa*, and lying down near the savages, soon sunk into profound sleep.

On awaking in the morning, I found my companions ready for departure. My guide had saddled our horses; the warriors were armed, and the women busy in collecting their baggage; which consited of skins, maize, and smoked bear. I arose, and taking from my portmanteau some powder and ball, and a box made of red wood, distributed these among my associates of the night, who appeared to be pleased with my generosity. We then separated not without signs of mutual regard and regret, each touching his forehead and breast, according to the custom of these children of nature, which appeared to me very superior to the ceremonies practised by us. Even to the young Indian, who cordially took the hand which I offered, we all parted with hearts full of each other. Our friends pursued their way to the North, being directed by the mosses, and we to the West under the guidance of my compass. The warriors departed first, the women followed, carrying the baggage and infants on their backs, suspended in furs. The

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little creatures looked back at us and smiled. My eyes for a long time followed this affecting and maternal spectacle, till at length the group entirely disappeared among the thickets.

Benevolent savages, who so hospitably entertained me, and whom I doubtless shall never again behold, let me be here permitted to pay the tribute of my gratitude. May you long enjoy your precious independence in those delightful solitudes, where my wishes for your happiness will ever follow you. What corner, my friends, of your immense deserts, do you at present inhabit? Are you still together, and always happy? Do you sometimes talk about the stranger of the forest? Do you picture to yourselves the kind of country which he inhabits? Do you utter wishes for his happiness, while you recline upon the banks of your solitary rivers? Generous family! His lot is much changed since the night he passed with you; but it is at least a consolation to him, while persecuted by his countrymen beyond the seas, that his name is, in some unknown wilderness at the other extremity of the world, still pronounced with tender recollection by the poor Indians.

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ANECDOTE

Of a Frenchman, who dwelt among the Savages.

PHILIP DE COCQ, who was born in a little village of Pitou, went to Canada in his infancy, served there as a soldier, at the age of twenty years, during the war of 1754, and after the battle of Quebec retired to the country of the Five Nations, where, having married an Indian woman, he renounced the customs of his native land to adopt the manners of the savages. When I was travelling through the wilds of America, I was not a little surprised to hear that I had a countryman established as a resident, at some distance in the woods. I visited him with eagerness, and found him employed in pointing some stakes at the door of his hut. He cast a look towards me, which was cold enough, and continued his work; but the moment I addressed him in French, he started at the recollection of his country, and the big tear stood in his

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eye. These well-known accents suddenly roused, in the heart of the old man, all the sensations of his infancy. In youth we little regret the pleasures of our first years; but the further we advance into life the more interesting to us becomes the recollection of them; for then every one of our days supplies a sad subject for comparison. Philip intreated me to enter his dwelling, and I followed him. He had considerable difficulty in expressing what he meant. I saw him labour to regain the ancient ideas of civilized man, and I watched him most closely. For instance, I had an opportunity of observing that there were two kinds of relative things absolutely effaced from his mind, viz. that of any superfluity being proper, and that of annoying others without an absolute necessity for it. I did not chuse to put my grand question, till after some hours of conversation had restored to him a sufficiency of words and ideas. At last I said to him: "Philip, are you happy?" He knew not at first how to reply.—"Happy," said he, reflecting—"happy! Yes; but happy only since I became a savage.—"And how do you pass

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your life?" asked I.—He laughed.—"I understand you," continued I. "You think such a question unworthy of an answer. But should you not like to resume your former mode of living, and return to your country?"—"My country! France! If I were not so old, I should like to see it again."—"And you would not remain there?" added I.—The motion of Philip's head answered my question sufficiently. "But what induced you," continued I, "to become what you call a savage?"—"I don't know," said he,—"instinct." This expression put an end to my doubts and questions. I remained two days with Philip, in order to observe him, and never saw him swerve for a single moment from the assertion he had made. His soul, free from the conflict of social passions, appeared to me, in the language of the savages with whom he dwelt, calm as the field of battle after the warriors had smoked together the *calumet* of peace.

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ON MACKENZIE'S TRAVELS

In the interior of North America.

THE general interest, with which travels are read, may perhaps be caused by the inconstancy and satiety of the human heart. Tired of the society with which we live, and of the vexations which surround us, we like to lose ourselves in the contemplation of distant countries, and among unknown nations. If the people, described to us, are happier than ourselves, their happiness diverts us; if more unfortunate, their afflictions are consolitary to us. But the interest, attached to the recital of travels, is every day diminishing in proportion to the increase of travellers. A philosophical spirit has caused the wonders of the desert to disappear,

"The magic woods have lost their former charm,"

as Fontanes says.

When the first Frenchmen, who investigated the shores of Canada, spoke of lakes similar to

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seas; cataracts which fall from Heaven, and forests the depth of which could not be explored, the mind was much more strongly moved than when an English merchant, or a modern *Savant* tells you that he has penetrated to the Pacific Ocean, and that the fall of Niagara is only a hundred and forty-four feet in depth.

What we gain in knowledge, by such information, we lose in sentiment. Geometrical truths have destroyed certain truths of the imagination, which are more important to morality than is supposed. Who were the first travellers of antiquity? The legislators, poets, and heroes—Jacob, Lycurgus, Pythagoras, Homer, Hercules, Alexander. The "*dire peregrinationis*" are mentioned in Genesis. At that time every thing was prodigious without ceasing to be real, and the hopes of these exalted men burst forth in the exclamation of "*Terra ignota! Terra immensa!*" *

We naturally dislike to be confined within bounds, and I could almost say that the globe

* Oh land unknown, oh land of vast extent!

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is become too small for man since he has sailed round it. If the night be more favourable than the day to inspiration and vast conceptions, it is because it conceals all limits, and assumes the appearance of immensity. The French and English travellers seem, like the warriors of those two nations, to have shared the empire of the earth and ocean. The latter have no one, whom they can oppose to Tavernier, Chardin, Parennin, and Charlevoix, nor can they boast of any great work like the "*Lettres Edifiantes*;" but the former, in their turn, possess no Anson, Byron, Cook, or Vancouver. The French travellers have done more than those of the rival nation towards making us acquainted with the manners and customs of foreign countries—νοον εγνω—*mores cognovit*; but the English have been more useful as to the progress of universal geography—εν. κοντω πολυν,* *in mari passus est.* They share with the Spaniards and Portuguese the honour of having added new seas and new

* Odyssey.

continents to the globe, and of having fixed the limits of the earth.

The prodigies of navigation are perhaps those, which afford the highest idea of human genius. The reader trembles, and is full of admiration when he sees Columbus plunging into the solitudes of an unknown ocean, Vasco de Gama doubling the cape of Tempests, Magellan emerging from a vast ocean to enter one vaster still, and Cook flying from one pole to the other, bounded on all sides by the shores of the globe, and unable to find more seas for his vessels.

What a beautiful spectacle does this navigator afford, when seeking unknown lands, not to oppress the inhabitants, but to succour and enlighten them; bearing to poor savages the requisites of life; swearing, on their charming banks, to maintain concord and amity with these simple children of nature; sowing among icy regions the fruits of a milder climate, and thus imitating Providence, who foresaw the fall and the wants of man!

Death having not permitted Captain Cook to complete his important discoveries, Captain

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Vancouver was appointed by the British Government to visit all the American coast from California to Cook's River or Inlet, as it is sometimes called, and to remove all doubts, which might yet remain concerning a passage to the North West of the New World. While this able officer fulfilled his mission with equal intelligence and courage, another English traveller, taking his departure from Upper Canada, proceeded across deserts and through forests to the North Sea and Pacific Ocean.

Mr. Mackenzie, of whose travels I am about to speak, neither pretends to the honour of being a scientific man, nor a writer. He was simply carrying on a traffic with the Indians in furs, and modestly gives his account to the public as only the journal of his expedition. Sometimes, however, he interrupts the thread of his narrative to describe a scene of nature, or the manners of the savages; but he never possesses the art of turning to his advantage those little occurrences, which are so interesting in the recitals of our missionaries. The reader is scarcely informed who were the companions of

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the author's fatigues. No transport is exhibited on discovering the ocean, which was the wished-for object of his enterprize, no scenes of tenderness at his return. In a word, the reader is never embarked in the canoe with the traveller, and never partakes of his fears, his hopes and his perils.

Another great fault is discoverable in this work. It is unfortunate that a simple journal should be deficient in method and perspicuity, but Mr. Mackenzie manages his subject in a confused way. He never states where Fort Chepewyan is, from which he first sets out; what discoveries had been made in the regions he was about to visit, before he undertook to explore them; whether the place, at which he stops near the entrance of the Frozen Sea, was a bay, or merely an expansion of the river, as one is led to suppose. How can the traveller too be certain that this great river of the West, which he calls Tacoutche Tessé is the river of Columbia, since he did not go down to its mouth? How happens it that part of the course of this

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river, which he did not visit, is nevertheless marked upon his map? &c. &c.

In spite of these numerous defects, the merit of Mr. Mackenzie's journal is very great, but it requires commentaries, at one time to give an idea of the deserts which the traveller is crossing, and impart a little spirit to the meagre dryness of his narrative, at another to explain some point of geography left in an obscure state by the author. These omissions I will attempt to supply.

Spain, England, and France owe all their American possessions to three Italians, Columbus, Cabot, and Verazani. The genius of Italy, buried under its ruins, like the giants under the mountains which they had piled upon each other, appears now and then to awake, for the purpose of astonishing the world. It was about the year 1523 that France employed Verazani to go in quest of new discoveries. This navigator examined more than 600 leagues of the North American coast, but he founded no colonies.

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James Cartier, his successor, visited all the country called *Kannata* by the savages, that is to say, *the mass of huts.** He ascended the great river, which received from him the name of St. Lawrence, and advanced as far as the island of *Montreal*, which was then called *Hochelaga*.

In 1540 M. de Roberval obtained the vice-royalty of Canada. He transported several families thither, with his brother, whom Francis I. distinguished by the appellation of *Hannibal's gen d'arme*, on account of his bravery; but being shipwrecked in 1540, "with them sunk," said Charlevoix, "all the hopes which had been conceived of forming an establishment in America, no one daring to flatter himself with the idea of being more skilful or fortunate than these two brave men."

The disturbances, which soon afterwards began in France, and continued fifty years,

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* The Spaniards had certainly discovered Canada before James Cartier and Verazani. There are some who assert that the name of Canada is derived from two Spanish words *Acca nada*.

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prevented the attention of government to any events at a distance. The genius of Henry IV. having stifled civil discord, the project of founding a colony in Canada was resumed with ardour. The Marquis de la Roche embarked in 1598 to try his fortune again, but his expedition had a disastrous end. M. Chauvin succeeded to his projects and misfortunes, and lastly the Commodore de Catte, being employed on the same enterprize about the year 1603, confided the direction of it to Samuel de Champelain, whose name brings to our recollection the founder of Quebec, and the father of French colonies in North America.

From this time the Jesuits were entrusted with the care of continuing the discoveries in the interior of the Canadian forests. Then began those famous missions, which extended the French Empire from the borders of the Atlantic, and the icy region of Hudson's Bay, to the shores of the gulph of Mexico. Fathers Biart and Enemond Masse traversed the whole of Nova Scotia; Father Joseph penetrated to Lake Nipiving; Fathers Brebeuf and Daniel visited

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the magnificient deserts of the Hurons, between the lake of that name, Lake Michighan, and Lake Erie; while Father de Lamberville caused Lake Ontario, and the five cantons of the Iroquois to be known. Attracted by the hope of martyrdom, and the recital of the sufferings which their companions had endured, other labourers in the evangelical vineyard arrived from all parts, and spread themselves into every dreary region. "They were sent," says the historian of New France, "and they went with joy. They accomplished the promise of the Saviour of mankind, by making his gospel known throughout the world."

The discovery of the Ohio and the Mississippi in the West of Lake Superior, the Lake of the Woods in the North West of the River Bourbon, and the interior coast of James Bay in the North, was the result of these apostolic travels. The Missionaries had even a knowledge of those *Rocky Mountains*,* which Mr. Mackenzie crossed on his way to the Pacific

* They called this chain the mountain of Brilliant Stones.

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Ocean, and of the great river flowing to the West, that is to say, the Columbia.—If any one should wish to convince himself that I advance only what is true, it will be sufficient to cast an eye over the ancient charts of the Jesuits.

All the great discoveries, therefore, in the interior of North America, were made or pointed out when the English became masters of Canada. By giving new names to the lakes, mountains, rivers and streams, or by corrupting the old French names, they have only thrown geography into disorder. It is not even sufficiently proved that the latitudes and longitudes, which they have given to certain places, are more exact than those fixed by our learned missionaries.*

In order to form a correct idea of the point

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* Mr. Arrowsmith is at present the most celebrated geographer in England. If any one will take his great map of the United States, and compare it with Imley's last maps, he will find a prodigious difference, particularly in that part which lies between the lakes of Canada and Ohio. The charts of the Missionaries, on the contrary, much resemble Imley's maps.

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from which Mr. Mackenzie took his departure, and of his general course, it is perhaps essential to observe the following particulars.

The French missionaries and the ramblers through Canada had pushed their discoveries as far as Lake Ouinipie, or Ouinipigon to the west, and as far as Lake Assinibouls or *Lac des Cristinaux* to the North. The first of these appears to be the one called by Mr. Mackenzie the Slave Lake.

The Anglo-Canadian Company, which carries on the trade in furs, has established a factory at Fort Chepewyan† or Chepawayan, on a lake called the Lake of the Mountains, which communicates with the Slave Lake by a river.

From the Slave Lake proceeds a river which flows to the North, and which Mr. Mackenzie designates by his own name. The river Mackenzie falls into the Polar Sea at 69° 14′ North lati-

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* The French maps place it in latitude 5° N. and the English in 53.

† 58° 40′ lat. N. and 10° 30′ long. W. meridian of Greenich.

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tude, and 135° west longitude, meridian of Greenwich. The discovery of this river and its navigation to the northern Ocean are the object of Mr. Mackenzie's first travels.

He left Fort Chepewyan on the 3rd of June 1789, and returned thither on the 12th of September in the same year. He left it a second time on the 10th of October 1792 on a new expedition, directing his course to the West. He crossed the Lake of the Mountains, and ascended a river called Oungijah, or Peace river, which takes its source in the Rocky Mountains. A great river descends beyond these mountains, and flows to the west where it loses itself in the Pacific Ocean. It is called Tacoutche-Tesse or Columbia.

The passage from Peace River to that of Columbia, and the facility of navigation in the latter, at least to the point where Mr. Mackenzie abandoned his canoe, were the discoveries which resulted from Mr. Mackenzie's second enterprize. After an absence of eleven months he returned to the place of his departure.

It must be observed that as Peace River

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proceeds from the Rocky Mountains to throw itself into an arm of the Lake of the Mountains; as the Lake of the Mountains communicates with Slave Lake by a river which bears this latter name; and as Slave Lake, in its turn, pours its waters into the Northern Ocean by the river Mackenzie, it follows that the Peace, Slave and Mackenzie rivers are in fact only one, which proceeds from the Rocky Mountains in the west, and precipitates itself into the Polar Ocean. Let us now take our departure with the traveller, and descend the river Mackenzie in company with him.

He crosses the Lake of the Mountains, enters Slave River, which brings him to the lake of the same name, coasts along the north bank of the lake, and finally discovers Mackenzie river. From the lake to this point the country on the north side is low and covered with forests; on the South it is more elevated but also very woody. We here observe many trees thrown down and blackened by fire in the midst of which young poplars appear, having risen there since the conflagration. It is worthy

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of remark that when a forest of firs and birches is consumed by fire, poplars appear instead of them, though there was previously no tree of this genus in the space laid open by the devouring element.

The naturalist will perhaps contest the accuracy of this observation on the part of Mr. Mackenzie; for in Europe every thing, which deranges our systems, is treated as ignorance, or the wandering of imagination; but no philosopher can deny and no artist can depict the beauty of the streams which water the New World. Let the reader represent to himself an immense river, flowing through the thickest forests—let him figure to himself all the accidental circumstances connected with the trees upon its banks. The American oaks, falling from old age, bathe their hoary heads in the stream; the plane of the West bend towards the wave with the black squirrels and white ermines, which are climbing up their trunks, or sporting among their branches; the Canadian sycamores join in the group; the Virginian poplars grow in a solitary manner, or lengthen themselves out

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into a moving avenue. Sometimes a river rushing from the depths of a desert, forms a magnificent junction with another river as it crosses some noble forest. At other times a roaring cataract covers the side of a mountain with its azure veil. The banks seem to fly, to bend, to enlarge, to diminish. Here are towering rocks which overhang the stream, there groups of young trees, the tops of which are flattened like the plain that gave them birth. On all sides murmurs are heard, which it would be difficult to define. They proceed from frogs which low like bulls* and from others which live in the trunks of old willows.† The repeated cry of the latter alternately resembles the tinkling of a bell such as hangs about the neck of sheep, and the barking of a dog.‡ The traveller, agreeably

* *Bull-frog.*

† *Tree-frog.*

‡ "They deposit their young in the stumps of decayed trees. They do not croak like the frogs in Europe, but during the night bark like dogs." *Le Père du Tertre,* Histoire Natur. des Antilles. Tom. III, No. 317.

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deceived in these wild regions, fancies that he is approaching the cottage of a labourer, and that he hears the distant motion of a flock.

Harmonious warblings swell upon the breeze, and fill the woods, as if the Hamadryads joined in universal chorus; but the concert soon grows weaker, and gradually dies away among the cedars and the rushes, so that you can hardly say, at the moment the sounds diminish into silence, whether they still exist, or are only continued by imagination.

Mr. Mackenzie, continuing to descend the river, arrived ere long at the country inhabited by the savages called Indian Slaves. They informed him that he would find lower down, on the banks of the same stream, another tribe called Hare Indians; and still lower, as he approached the sea, the Esquimaux.

"During our short stay with these people, they amused us with dancing, which they accompanied with their voices. They leap about and throw themselves into various antic postures. The women suffer their arms to hang, as without the power of motion."

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The songs and dances of savages have always something in them, which is melancholy or voluptuous. "Some play the flute," says the father du Tertre, "others sing, and form a kind of music which has to them much sweetness." According to Lucretius attempts were made to imitate the singing of birds by the human voice, long before poetry, accompanied by the lyre, charmed the ears of mankind.

At liquidas avium voces imitarier ore
Ante fuit multò, quam lævia carmina cantu
Concelebrare homines possent, auresque juvare.

Sometimes you see a poor Indian, whose body is quite bent by excessive labour and fatigue, and a hunter, whose appearance breathes a spirit of cheerfulness. When they dance together, you are struck with an astonishing contrast; the former becomes at once straight and balances himself with unexpected ease; the latter sings the most melancholy airs. The young female appears as if she wished to imitate the graceful undulations of the birches in her desert, and the youth the plaintive murmurs which creep through their branches.

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When these dances take place on the margin of a river, and in the recesses of a forest, where unknown echoes for the first time repeat the sound of the human voice; and where the bear of the desert looks from the heights of some rock at these pastimes of savage man, we cannot but acknowledge that there is something grand in the very rudeness of the picture; we cannot but be affected when we reflect upon the destiny of this child of nature, which is born unknown to the world, dances for a moment in the valleys through which it will never pass again, and soon reposes in the grave, under the moss of these deserts which has not even preserved the impression of its footsteps. "*Fuissen quasi non essem.*"

Passing under some sterile mountains, the traveller steered to land and climbed the steep rocks with one of his Indian hunters. Four chains of mountains form the grand divisions of North America.

The first proceeds from Mexico, and is only a prolongation of the Andes, which cross the Isthmus of Panama. It stretches from South to North along the great South Sea, al-

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ways inclining towards Cook's Inlet. Mr. Mackenzie calls this ridge the Rocky Mountains, and passed them between the source of Peace river and the river Columbia, where it falls into the Pacific Ocean.

The second chain begins at the *Apalaches*, on the Eastern borders of the Missisippi, extends to the North-East under the name of the *Alleganies*, the *Blue Mountains*, and the *Laurel Mountains*, passing behind the Floridas, Virginia and New England, through the interior of Nova Scotia to the gulph of St. Lawrence. It devides the waters, which fall into the Atlantic, from those which swell the Missisippi, the Ohio, and the lakes of Lower Canada.

It is probable that this chain formerly extended to the Atlantic, and served as a barrier to it, in the same way as the first ridge still borders on the Indian Ocean. The ancient continent of America, therefore, apparently began at these mountains; for the three different level tracts of country, so regularly marked, from the plains of Pensylvania to the Savannahs of Florida, indicate that the part in question was

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covered with water, and afterwards left bare at different periods.

Opposite the bank of the gulph of St. Lawrence (where, as I have said, the second chain terminates) rises, on the East of Labrador, a third ridge almost as long as the two former. It extends at first on the South-East to the *Outaouas*, forming the double source of the rivers which precipitate themselves into Hudson's Bay, and those which pay the tribute of their waters to the gulph of St. Lawrence; then turning to the North-West, and stretching along the Northern coast of Lake Superior, it arrives at Lake St. Anne, where it takes the shape of a fork, to the North-West and South-West.

Its Southern arm passes to the South of great lake *Ouinipic*, between the marshes which feed the river Albany to James Bay and the fountains, from which the Missisippi receives its floods destined to fall into the gulph of Mexico.

Its Northern arm touches on Swan's Lake and the factory of Osnaburgh; then crossing the river Severn, reaches Port Nelson river,

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passing to the North of Lake Ouinipic. It finally unites with the fourth chain of mountains.

This is of less extent than any of the others. It begins at the borders of the river *Saskatchiwine*, stretches to the North-East between the rivers Erlan and Churchhill, then extends Northward to latitude 57, where it is divided into two branches, of which the one, continuing its Northern direction, reaches the coast of the Frozen Sea; while the other, running to the West, meets with Mackenzie river. The eternal snow, with which these mountains are crowned, feeds, on the one hand, the rivers which fall into Hudson's Bay, and on the other, those which are swallowed by the Northern ocean.

It was one of the mountains of this last chain which Mr. Mackenzie wanted to climb with his attendant. Those, who have only seen the Alps and Pyrenees, can form no idea of these hyperborean solitudes, these desolate regions where strange animals are wandering on unknown mountains, as was the case after the general deluge. "*Rara per ignotos errent ani-*

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malia montes." Clouds, or rather humid fogs, incessantly hang on the summits of these dismal elevations. Rocks, which are beaten with perpetual rains, pierce with their blackened crags through the whitish vapour, resembling in their forms and immobility phantoms, which are gazing at each other in frightful silence!

Between these mountains, deep vallies of granite are perceptible, clothed in moss and watered with torrents. Stinted firs, of the species called by the English spruce, and small ponds of brackish water, far from varying the monotony of the scene, augment its uniformity and gloominess. These regions resound with the extraordinary cry of the bird, which inhabits the North. Beautiful swans that swim on these wild waters, and clusters of raspberry bushes growing under the shelter of some rock, seem as if sheltered there to console the traveller, and to remind him of that Providence, which knows how to spread graces and perfumes even through the most desolate country. But it is at the borders of the ocean that the scene is beheld in all its horrors. On one side extend vast fields of

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ice, against which break the discoloured waves, and no sail is ever beheld upon them; on the other rises a district, mountainous, barren, and calculated to inspire the most melancholy ideas. Along the coast nothing is to be seen but a sad succession of dreary bays and stormy promontories. At night the traveller takes refuge in some cleft of a rock, driving from it the sea eagle, that flies away with clamorous shrieks. All night he listens with terror to the roaring of the winds re-echoed in his cavern, and the cracking of the ice upon the shore. Mr. Mackenzie arrived at the coast of the Frozen Ocean on the 12th July, 1789, or rather at a bay of ice where he observed whales, and perceived a flux and reflux of tide. He landed on an island, the latitude of which he fixed at 69° 14′ N. This was the boundary of his first expedition. The ice, want of provisions, and the depression of spirits exhibited by his people, did not allow him to descend as far as the sea, which was doubtless only at a short distance from him. For a long time the sun had never set to the eye of the traveller, but appeared pale

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and enlarged, as it mournfully moved through the frozen expanse.

> Miserable they
> Who, here entangled in the gath'ring ice,
> Take their last look of the descending sun!
> While, full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
> The long, long night, incumbent o'er their head,
> Falls horrible.
>
> *Thomson's Winter.*

On quitting the bay to re-ascend the river, and return to Fort *Chipewyan*, Mr. Mackenzie passed four Indian establishments, which appeared to have been recently inhabited.

"We then landed," says the traveller, "upon a small round island which possessed somewhat of a sacred character. On the top of it seemed to be a place of sepulture, from the numerous graves which we observed there. We found the frame of a small canoe, with various dishes, troughs and other utensils, which had been the living property of those who could now use them no more, and form the ordinary accompaniments of their last abodes."

Mr. Mackenzie often speaks of the religion

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of these nations, and their veneration for the tomb. The unfortunate savage blesses God in these icy regions, and deduces from his own misery the hopes of another life, while civilized man, in a mild climate and surrounded by all the gifts of Providence, denies his Creator.

Thus we have seen the inhabitants of these countries, dancing at the source of the river which our traveller has traced, and we now find their tombs near the sea, at the mouth of this same river—a striking emblem of the course of our years, from the fountains of joy in which we are plunged during infancy, to the ocean of eternity which swallows us. These Indian cemeteries, scattered among the American forests, are in fact glades, or small inclosures cleared of the wood that grew upon them. The scite of them is entirely covered with mounds of a conical form; while carcases of buffaloes and elks, buried among the herbage, are here and there intermingled with human skeletons. I have sometimes seen in these places a solitary pelican, perched upon the whitened moss-covered bones, resembling, in its silence and pensive attitude, some old savage,

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weeping and meditating over the remains of his fellow creatures. The people, who carry on a commerce in furs, avail themselves of the land thus half cleared by death, to sow there, as they pass, different sorts of grain. The traveller all at once finds these colonies of European vegetables, with their foreign air, their foreign dress, and their domestic habits, in the midst of those wild plants which are natives of this distant climate. They often emigrate over the hills, and extend through the woods, according to the inclinations which they brought from their indigenous soil. It was thus that exiled families preferred, in the desert, those situations which recalled the idea of their country.

On the 12th of September 1789, after an absence of a hundred and two days, Mr. Mackenzie again arrived at Fort Chipewyan.—Three years after his first undertaking, he left this Fort a second time, crossed the Lake of the Hills, and reached Peace River. He pursued his way upon this stream for twenty days, and arrived on the first of September 1792 at a place, where he proposed to build a house and pass the win-

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ter. He employed all the cold season in carrying on a commerce with the Indians, and making preparations for his expedition.

"On the 20th of April the river was yet covered with ice, the plains were delightful, the trees were budding and many plants in blossom."

That, which is called in North America the *great thaw*, affords to the eye of the European a spectacle not less magnificent than extraordinary. During the first fortnight of April, the clouds, which till then came rapidly from the North West, gradually cease their course in the Heavens, and float for some time, as if uncertain what direction to take. The colonist leaves his hut, and goes over his cultivated land to examine the desert. Suddenly he exclaims: "There comes the South-East breeze!" At this instant a luke-warm air is felt playing on the hands and face, while the clouds begin to return slowly towards the North. Every thing in the valley and woods undergoes a complete change. The mossy point of the rocks first display themselves, amidst the uniform whiteness of hoar frost; then appear the firs; and among them

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forward shrubs, which are now hung with festoons of flowers, instead of the frozen chrystals of late pendent from their branches. Nature gradually opens her veil of snow as the sun approaches. The American poets will, perhaps at some future day, compare her to a bride, who takes off her virgin robe timidly and as if with regret, half revealing and yet trying to conceal her charms from her husband.

It is then that the savages, whose deserts Mr. Mackenzie was exploring, joyfully issue from their caverns. Like the birds of their climate, winter collects them together, and spring disperses them. Every couple returns to its solitary wood, to build a new nest, and sing of renovated love.

This season, which puts all in motion through the American forests, gave our traveller the signal of departure. On Thursday the 9th of May, 1793, Mr. Mackenzie set out with six Canadians and two Indian hunters, in a canoe made of bark. If he could, from the borders of the Peace River, have seen what was passing in Europe at that time, in a great ci-

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vilized nation, the hut of the Equimaux would have appeared, in his estimation, preferable to the palaces of kings, and solitude to a commerce with mankind.

The French translator of Mr. Mackenzie's travels observes that the companions of the English merchant were, with one exception, all of French origin. The French easily accustom themselves to savage life, and are much beloved by the Indians. When Canada fell into the hands of the English in 1729, the natives soon perceived the difference. "The English," says Father Charlevoix, "during the short time that they were masters of the country, did not succeed in gaining the affections of the Indians. The Hurons never appeared at Quebec. Other tribes which were nearer to this city, and several of which had, from taking individual offence at different matters, openly declared against us, at the approach of the English squadron, likewise shewed themselves but rarely. They had all been not a little disconcerted at finding that when they wished to take the same liberties with the new comers, which the French had

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without any difficulty allowed, their manners had not pleased. It was still worse in a short time, when they were driven with blows out of the houses, which they had hitherto entered with the same freedom as their own huts. They resolved, therefore, to withdraw; and nothing so much attached them to our interest afterwards, as this difference of manners and character in the two nations which had established themselves there. The missionaries, who were soon aware of the impression made upon the Indians, availed themselves of it to convert these savages to the Christian faith, and attach them to the French nation." The French never attempt to civilize them, for that would cost too much trouble; they like better to become savages themselves. The forest can boast of no hunters who are more adroit, no warriors who are more intrepid. They have been seen to endure the infliction of torture with a degree of firmness that astonished even the Iroquois, and unfortunately they have been also seen to become as barbarous as their torturers. Is it that the extremes of a circle meet, and that the highest

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degree of civilization, being the perfection of the art, touches closely upon nature? Or rather, is it not a sort of universal talent and pliability of manners, that adapt the Frenchman to every climate and to every sphere of life? Be this as it may, he and the American Indian possess the same bravery, the same indifference as to life, the same improvidence as to what will happen to-morrow, the same dislike to work, the same inclination to be tired of the good things which they possess, the same inconstancy in love, the same taste for dancing and for war, the fatigues of the chace and the pleasures of the feast. These similarities of disposition in the Frenchman and Indian cause in them a great inclination towards each other, and easily convert the inhabitant of Paris into the rambler of the Canadian woods.

Mr. Mackenzie re-ascended the Peace River with his French savages, and thus describes the beauty of nature around him.

"From the place which we quitted this morning, the West side of the river displayed a succession of the most beautiful scenery I had

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ever beheld. The ground rises at intervals to a considerable height, and stretching inwards to a considerable distance, at every interval or pause in the river, there is a very gently ascending space or lawn, which is alternate with abrupt precipices to the summit of the whole, or at least as far as the eye could distinguish. This magnificent theatre of nature has all the decorations which the trees and animals of the country can afford it. Groves of poplars, in every shape, vary the scene, and their intervals are enlivened with vast herds of elks and buffaloes; the former choosing the steeps and uplands, the latter preferring the plains. At this time the buffaloes were attended with their young ones, who were frisking about them, and it appeared that the elks would soon exhibit the same enlivening circumstance. The whole country displayed an exuberant verdure. The trees, that bear a blossom, were advancing fast to that delightful appearance, and the velvet rind of their branches, reflecting the oblique rays of a rising or setting sun, added a splendid gaiety to the scene, which no expressions of mine are qualified to describe."

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These amphitheatrical spectacles are common in America. Not far from *Apalachuela*, in the Floridas, the land gradually rises on leaving the river *Chataleche*, and towers into the air as it verges to the horizon; but it is not an ordinary inclination, like that of a valley; it is by natural terraces ranged one above another, like the artificial gardens of some mighty potentate. These terraces are planted with different trees, and watered by a multitude of fountains, the streams of which, exposed to the rising sun, sparkle amidst the verdure, or flow with golden lustre past the mossy rocks. Blocks of granite surmount this vast structure, and are themselves topped by lofty pines. When you discover this superb chain of terraces from the margin of the river, and the summit of the rocks which crown them enveloped in clouds, you think that you are beholding the columns of Nature's temple, and the magnificent steps which lead to it.

The traveller reached the Rocky Mountains, and began to wind among them. Obstacles and dangers increased on all sides. Here his people were obliged to carry the baggage by

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land, in order to avoid the cataracts and rapids; there they found it necessary to resist the impetuosity of the current by laboriously drawing the canoe with a cord. Mr. Mackenzie's whole passage through these mountains is very interesting. At one time he is compelled to hew down trees and cut his way into the forest; at another he leaps from rock to rock at the risk of his life, and receives his companions, one after another, upon his shoulders. The cord breaks—the canoe strikes upon the shelves—the Canadians are discouraged, and refuse to go any further. It is in vain that Mr. Mackenzie wanders in the desert for the purpose of discovering the passage to the river in the West. Some reports of fire arms, which he hears in this desolate region, alarm him with the supposition that hostile savages approach. He climbs up a high tree, but can discern nothing except mountains covered with snow, in the midst of which are some stinted birches, and below, woods extending apparently *ad infinitum*.

Nothing is so dreary as the appearance of these woods, when surveyed from the summits

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of mountains in the New World. The valleys, which you have traversed, and which you command on all sides, appear in regular undulations beneath you, like the billows of the ocean after a storm. They seem to diminish in size according to the distance, at which you gradually leave them. Those that are nearest to you are of a reddish green tint, the next are slightly coloured with azure, and the remotest form parallel belts of sky blue.

Mr. Mackenzie descended from his tree and endeavoured to find his companions. He no longer saw the canoe at the bank of the river. He fired his gun, but no answer was given to his signal. He went first one way and then another, alternately walking up and down the side of the river. At length he found his friends, but not till after he had passed four-and-twenty hours in excessive anxiety and uneasiness. Soon afterwards he met some savages. When interrogated by the traveller, they pretended at first to be ignorant of any river in the West, but an old man was induced, by the caresses and presents of Mr. Mackenzie, to become, at

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length, more communicative. "He knew," observes Mr. M. "of a large river that runs towards the mid-day sun, a branch of which flowed near the source of that which we were now navigating, and said that there were only three small lakes, and as many carrying places, leading to a small river which discharges itself into the great one."

The reader may imagine what were Mr. Mackenzie's transports on hearing this happy intelligence. He hastened to embark, accompanied by an Indian, who undertook to act as his guide to the unknown stream. He soon quitted the Peace River, and entered another of a more contracted width, which proceeded from a neighbouring lake. He crossed this lake, and proceeded from one lake to another, from one river to another, till, after being wrecked and encountering various other accidents, he found himself, on the 18th of June, 1793, upon the Tacoutche Tesse, or Columbia, which falls into the Pacific Ocean.

Between two chains of mountains lay a grand valley, shaded by forests of poplars,

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cedars, and birches. Under these forests the traveller descried columns of smoke, announcing to him the dwellings of the invincible savages who inhabit this region. The red and white clay, here and there, on the steep sides of the mountains, conveyed the idea of ancient ruins. The river Columbia pursues its winding course through these beautiful retreats, and on the numerous islands, which divide its stream, large huts were seen, half concealed among the groves of pines, where the natives pass their summers.

Some savages having made their appearance upon the bank, the traveller approached them, and succeeded in obtaining from them valuable information.

"According to their account, this river, whose course is very extensive, runs toward the mid-day sun; and at its mouth, as they had been informed, white people were building houses. They represented its current to be uniformly strong, and that in three places it was altogether impassable, from the falls and rapids which poured along between perpendicular rocks that were much higher and more rugged than

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any we had yet seen, and would not admit of any passage over them. But besides the difficulties and dangers of the navigation, they added, that we should have to encounter the inhabitants of the country, who were very numerous."

This account threw Mr. Mackenzie into great perplexity, and again discouraged his companions. He concealed his uneasiness, however, as well as he could, and for some time still followed the course of the waters. He met with other natives, who confirmed the report he had previously received, but who told him that if he chose to quit the river, and proceed directly to the West, he would arrive at the sea in a few days by a very easy road, which was well known to the savages.

Mr. Mackenzie immediately determined to act upon this suggestion. He re-ascended the river till he reached the mouth of a small stream that had been pointed out to him, and leaving his canoe there, penetrated into the woods, on the faith of an Indian who acted as his guide, and who, on taking the slightest offence, might

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deliver him to hostile hordes, or abandon him in the midst of the deserts.

Each Canadian carried on his shoulders a package weighing ninety pounds, exclusive of his gun and ammunition, the last of which was in no great quantity. Mr. Mackenzie himself carried, in addition to his arms and telescope, a load of provisions and trinkets, weighing seventy pounds.

The necessity of enduring what they had undertaken, fatigue, and an indescribable sensation of confidence, which is acquired by being accustomed to dangers, soon removed all uneasiness from the minds of our travellers. After a long day's journey through thickets, after being at one time exposed to a scorching sun, and at another drenched with heavy rains, they quietly fell asleep at night to the sound of the Indian's song.

Mr. Mackenzie describes this song as consisting of soft melancholy sounds, tolerably melodious, and in some degree resembling church music. When a traveller awakes under a tree at midnight, in the deserts of America,

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and hears the distant concert of some savages, interrupted at intervals by long pauses and the murmur of the wind through the forest, nothing can impart to him a more perfect idea of that aerial music mentioned by Ossian, which departed bards cause to be heard by moonlight on the summit of *Slimora*. Our travellers now arrived at districts inhabited by Indian tribes, whose manners Mr. Mackenzie describes in a manner that much affects the feelings of the reader. He saw a woman, who was almost blind, and much oppressed by age, carried alternately by her own parents, because her infirmities would not allow her to walk. On another occasion, a young woman, with her child, presented to him a vessel full of water, at the passage of a river, as Rebecca filled her pitcher for the servant of Abraham at the wells of Nahor, and said to him: "Drink, and I will draw water for thy camels also."

I myself was once among an Indian tribe, where several of them wept at seeing a traveller, because it reminded them of friends, who

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were gone to the *Land of Souls*, and had set out long ago upon their *Travels*.

Every thing is important to the tourist of the desert. The print of a man's foot, recently made, in some wild spot is more interesting to him than the vestiges of antiquity in the plains of Greece. Led by the indications of a neighbouring population, Mr. Mackenzie passed through the village of a hospitable people, where every hut is accompanied by a tomb. Leaving this place, he arrived at the Salmon River, which discharges itself into the Pacific Ocean. A numerous tribe more polished, better clad, and better accommodated as to their dwellings, received him with cordiality. An old man forced his way through the crowd, and clasped him in his arms. A banquet was prepared to welcome him, and he was supplied with provisions in abundance. A youth took a mantle from his own shoulders, and placed it on those of Mr. Mackenzie. It is almost like a scene in Homer. M. Mackenzie passed several days among this tribe. He examined the cemetery, which was only a great wood of cedars, where the dead were burnt and

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which constituted a temple for the celebration of two annual festivals, the one in spring and the other in autumn. When he walked through the village, sick people were brought to him that he might cure them, an affecting *trait* of simplicity on the part of a people, among whom man is still dear to man, and who perceive only one advantage in superior knowledge—that of relieving the unfortunate.

The chief of the nation finally appointed his own son to accompany M. Mackenzie to the sea in a canoe made of cedar, which he presented to the traveller. This chief informed M. Mackenzie that ten winters previous to the time at which he spoke, while embarked in the same canoe, with forty Indians, he found on the coast two vessels full of white men. It was the good *Tooler**, whose memory will be long dear to the people dwelling on the borders of the Pacific Ocean.

On Saturday, the 20th July, 1793, at eight o'clock in the morning, M. Mackenzie

* Captain Cook.

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left the Salmon River, and entered into the arm of the sea, where this river discharges itself from several mouths. It would be useless to follow him in his navigation of this bay, where he constantly found traces of captain Vancouver. He observed the latitude at 52° 21' 33", and says: "I now mixed up some vermilion in melted grease, and inscribed, in large characters, on the South East face of the rock, on which we had slept last night, this brief memorial—Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, twenty second of July, one thousand, seven hundred and ninety three."

The discoveries of this traveller supply us with two great results, the one important to commerce, the other to geography. It is thus that England, by the various researches of her enterprizing inhabitants, sees before her new sources of wealth, and a new road to her establishments in the Indies and China.

As to the progress in geography, which in fact tends also to the advantage of commerce, Mr. Mackenzie's expedition to the West is less important than the one to the North. Captain

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Vancouver had sufficiently proved that there is no passage on the western coast of America, from Nootka sound to Cook's River. Thanks to the labours of Mr. Mackenzie, but little remains to be done in the North. The extremity of Refus Bay is situated about 68° lat. N. and 85° long. W. meridian of Greenwich. In 1771 Mr. Hearne, who went from Hudson's Bay, saw the sea at the month of the river of the *Cuivre Mines*, nearly at 69° lat. and 110° long. There are then only five or six degrees of longitude between the sea observed by M. Hearn, and the sea at the extremity of Hudson's Bay.

In a latitude so elevated, the degrees of longitude are very minute. Suppose them to be a dozen leagues each, and there remain hardly more than seventy-two leagues to be discovered between the two points mentioned.

In 135° long. at the West of the mouth, by which the river of the *Cuivre Mines* discharges itself, Mr. Mackenzie discovered the sea at 69° 7' lat. N. By following our first calculation, therefore, we shall have no more than sixty leagues of unknown coast between the sea obser-

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ved by Mr. Hearn and that by Mr. Mackenzie.

Continuing towards the West, we find Behring's strait. Captain Cook advanced beyond this straight to 69° or 70° lat. N. and 141° long. W. a distance of seventy-two leagues, so that there are no more than 6° of longitude between the Northern Ocean of Cook and that of Mackenzie.

Here then is a chain of established points at which the sea has been perceived round the Pole on the northern coast of America, from the extremity of Behring's Strait to the extremity of Hudson's Bay. It remains only to travel by land through the three intervals, which divide these points, and which cannot together extend beyond two hundred and fifty leagues. We shall then ascertain that the continent of America is bounded on every side by the ocean, and that there is, at its northern extremity, a sea which is perhaps accessible to vessels.

May I be allowed to make one remark? Mr. Mackenzie has effected, for the advantage

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of England, what I undertook and proposed to the French government. My project will, at all events, no longer seem chimerical. While others were in search of fortune and repose, I solicited the honour of bearing the French name into unknown seas, at the peril of my life; of founding for my country a colony upon the Pacific Ocean, of wresting the profits, attendant on a wealthy branch of commerce, from her rival; and of preventing that rival's use of any new roads to the Indies.

In giving an account of Mr. Mackenzie's travels, I have been justified in mingling my own observations with his, because the design of both was the same, and because, at the moment that he was employed on his first expedition, I was also wandering through the forests of America. But he was supported in his undertaking; he left behind him happy friends and a tranquil country. I was not so fortunate.

END OF VOL. I.

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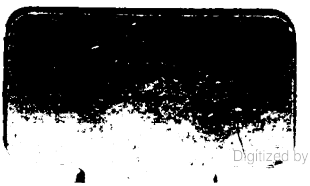

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